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CONTENTS

	Page
COMMENTS	337
RELIGION IN RUSSIA. By H. N. Brailsford	339
SCUM OF THE EARTH. By Kingsley Martin	339
A LONDON DIARY. By Critic	340
THIS ENGLAND	341
CHILDREN WHO WENT. By Alison Graham	341
THREE WOMEN. By Sagittarius	341
AUSTRALIA'S LABOUR GOVERNMENT. By Henry Bateson	342
WARTIME CULTURE. By C. E. M. Joad	342
PLAYING THE GAME. By Y. Y.	343
THE MOVIES. By William Whitebait	344
PLAYS AND PICTURES	344
CORRESPONDENCE	345
From G. Bernard Shaw; E. Sandford Carter; L. H. Cripps; D. S. Anderson; A. Morgan Young; Mollie Jones; Socialist Non-Communist; Wenzel Jaksch; Lt. Alfred Hrejsemnou; John E. Mansell; Irene Taylor; Leslie G. Fisher; Brig.-General Waters; Canadian Officer.	
BOOKS IN GENERAL. By V. S. Pritchett	347
REVIEWS:	
Fighter Pilot. By Peter Quennell	347
Inside Germany. By Tom Paine	348
A Life Sentence. By Harry Roberts	349
Inglese Italianato. By Freda White	349
The Babe at the Breast. By Augusta Bonnard	350
SHORTER NOTICES	350
WEEK-END COMPETITIONS	351

THE EASTERN BATTLE

ALL Russia's available resources of man-power and material are mobilised to meet the German thrusts both on the north and south-west of Moscow and towards Rostov and the Caucasian oil. This week's fighting may well be a decisive battle in shaping the future of Europe and Asia. On the Russian front millions die; behind the lines in Europe hundreds of brave men are being executed. The hangman is busy in France; in Jugoslavia German troops are called in to crush two large-scale revolts; in Poland underground work flares up in the scene of savage desolation; and in Czechoslovakia the Nazis are forced to abandon the pretence of governing through a puppet Czech Government and to resort to a policy of wholesale killing. Heydrich's repression will be none the less ruthless because he seems to have been told that it is better that men die secretly rather than that their end should be advertised to a patriotic people.

No help reaches those who revolt. Hitler has again wisely timed his assault. Once again we are compelled to stand by and watch while those whom we have promised to liberate are crushed. Our General Staff has, no doubt, some long distance plans; it hopes to help in the Caucasus; Britain has a large and well-equipped army in the Near East and in India, where General Wavell is preparing for 1942. No time was wasted once the Beaverbrook-Harriman mission got to work in Moscow. But the tanks that are promised cannot yet have reached the blood-soaked country over which the German armies advance. Britain still plans for a long war; meanwhile the supreme opportunity passes. We hope that not too many of our soldiers or leaders rely, like General Ironside of Archangel, on the Germans suddenly "cracking." Some time, no doubt; but victorious armies and disciplined peoples do not crack when British generals tell them to, and we have no doubt that General Ironside was sure the Russians would crack the day before he disembarked his troops from Archangel.

Perhaps there is one way in which immediate aid can still be given to Russia. In the Far East Stalin has still a huge and unused army much of whose man-power and equipment can be transferred for the defence of western Russia, if Japan can be prevented from playing the jackal's role which Italy played when France had its back to the wall. If Britain and the U.S.A can guarantee Russia against a Japanese attack in Siberia, Hitler may still have to face formidable reinforcements in the west.

In China the prospect is better. In this section of the battle for Asia Japan has suffered a considerable reverse. The Japanese advance from Canton against the province of Hunan has been thrown back from Chungsha; the most decisive victory yet scored by China, and one immensely inspiriting to the Chinese people. The Japanese have sought to compensate for it by an expedition into Honian, along the Yellow River, and have taken the railway junction of Chengchow. China is still at the "second phase" of her warfare; a combination of evasion and defence in depth, the resort of a nation superior in numbers and inferior in armament. The strategy employed is to allow the Japanese to advance, and then to pour in upon their flanks in great numbers and cut off the advanced body. It is in fact the method learnt in Europe by experience of panzer warfare; but the Chinese have been employing it for three years now. Their ability to take the offensive must depend largely upon supplies of heavy armament from abroad; they make the bulk of their light arms, but have no production of field guns, or aeroplanes. For this reason their communications with the outer world are of crucial importance. The Burma Road is in full use, despite the destruction of three bridges by Japanese bombing, and the need to use fords at these places; it is being repaired to carry 50,000 tons monthly of Lend-Lease material. A new road, running down the Tibetan border and thence west into India, is being made as an alternative route further from Japanese attack. The Sinkiang road carries little from Russia since the Soviet Republic was invaded, but it remains a main artery for Chinese traffic. China has built, in four years of desperate war, four-fifths as much roadway as she owned in peacetime.

Mr. Duff Cooper's conference at Singapore, which included the Ministers from China and Thailand and the military commanders in the Far East, has been followed by meetings between Sir Robert Brooke-Popham and General Magruder, the head of the American military mission to China, at Manila. Sir Otto Niemeyer, chief of the British financial mission to China, met the others at Hong Kong. There is every sign of concerted effort to help China's defence. The simultaneous Japanese seizure of private docks and warehouses in Saigon, and their commandeering of oil depots in Indo-China, is their counter-move in what they so peculiarly call the "pacification of the Far East." The Pacific situation evidently is boiling up again; but it would be mistaken to impute Japanese bellicosity to the firmer line taken by the A.B.C. Powers. On the contrary, each time they act with decision the Tokio tight-rope dancer, with a bomb in either hand, comes to a wobbling pause.

The Home Front. *(by an Industrial Correspondent)*

I am going to make a suggestion about advance planning for reconstruction. The absurdity of having no real Ministry of Planning continues, presumably because nobody will be at the pains of deciding between the rival claims of Arthur Greenwood, Lord Reith, and the Minister of Health—to say nothing of the President of the Board of Trade, who is supposed to be responsible for the location of industry. Major matters cannot be settled until it has been decided who is to decide them, or at least who is responsible for putting forward proposals on which a decision can be based. But that is no reason why everything should have to stand still. My suggestion is that in every branch of

Government work likely to involve reconstruction problems of importance a few key men, without being taken off their present jobs, should be told definitely that they will be given positions in the work of reconstruction when the time comes, and should be told to begin *thinking* on that assumption. I should particularly like this to be done in the case of the industrial controls, now manned largely by business men and technicians taken from private employment. There will be a natural tendency for such men to scurry back to their normal jobs as soon as hostilities end, for fear of getting left out in the post-war reshuffle. If this is allowed to happen, the controls will be denuded of competent technical men, and there will be a horrible mess due to inexpert administration. Everyone should realise by now that it will be out of the question to remove many of the controls for a long time after the war, whatever business people may hope. A fair number of important managers and technicians will therefore have to be kept in the Government service. It is highly desirable that the key men in these categories should know now that their services are to be retained. At present, their attitude is inevitably coloured by the expectation of a return to profit-making business when the war is over. They will make better servants of the State, both for fighting the war and for planning the future, if they can be made to think of themselves from now onwards as likely to remain in public employment. I have come across one or two remarkable instances already of a change of attitude following up such a change of expectations; but such cases are bound to be rare, because not even the skeleton of a post-war economic staff has yet been designated. Of course, I would schedule a number of Civil Servants too, in each Ministry—not as a substitute for setting up a proper Planning Ministry, but as a necessary condition of making such a Ministry work when it is set up.

* * *

The Americans are beginning to be seriously alarmed about inflation. Now that arms output is going up fast, and more money being distributed in consequence, while at the same time there is beginning to be a scarcity of materials (not yet of man-power) for making consumers' goods, the tendency for prices to rise in the shops is growing marked. For the present, of course, there are considerable stocks in hand, but not nearly so considerable as there would have been but for the rapid progress in recent years of what is called "hand-to-mouth buying" by traders. These stocks will soon be getting used up; and then the American public is likely to experience both rapidly rising prices and natural shortage of supplies. When that does happen on any large scale, how will the American public react? Will it demand extensive arrangements for price-control, and thus push the country nearer to a war footing? Or will it let prices rip, in the sacred name of private enterprise, and thus get into a scramble in which the rich will get the goods and the poor get angry? And will either of these happenings strengthen isolationism to any serious extent? One thing can be confidently predicted—that taxation will not be pushed far enough to skim off the additional purchasing power. Bank deflation is already being tried as a remedy; but it will not work, because it is not in practice consistent with expanding arms output to the highest point. America is in fact now at that dangerous financial stage when it is still half on a war and half on a peace footing—which is just the stage at which movements of production on the one hand and monetary movements on the other are most likely to get out of step.

* * *

The Americans, of course, are nowhere near the point of conserting serious direct measures for the curtailment of consumers' supplies, except in the case of a very few commodities which compete obviously with war production. We, on the other hand, having reached that point, and put our feet in the water, are still hovering near the bank. The decision to remove a largish number of women under 25 out of the distributive trades into munitions will by no means suffice to deal with the real problem of wasted distributive labour. That problem cannot be tackled except by tackling the small shopkeepers—a step which the Government is still evidently reluctant to take. It is true that a high proportion of small shopkeepers are rather elderly, and not easy to transfer to heavier work, and also that the difficulties in the way of "concentration" in the retail trades are enormous, at any rate as long as the Government persists in the principle that no compensation is to be paid. In productive industries, "concentration" without compensation involves big hardships for the small employers, many of whom will probably never be able to re-start. But in these cases something can be done by pooling, whereas small shops are so diverse that pooling prevents almost if not quite insuperable difficulties. I think the Government will have to come to compensation, whether it likes it or not; for I do not believe that it can much longer leave more attrition to do its work in rationing the number of shopkeepers—to say nothing of the fact that this process works out with gross unfairness. We do not want a ruined class of small shopkeepers to complicate our political as well as our economic problems both during and after the war. *Sic itur ad Hitler.*

* * *

I enjoyed the letter which Capt. Coombs, of the Officers' Federation, wrote to *The Times* this week apropos of the present controversy about the status and conditions of merchant seamen. Capt. Coombs's reply to Lord Marchwood and his friends is that the officers of the mercantile marine are much less concerned about uniforms than about "hours of duty, engine-room manning, convoy collision casualty compensation, and port reliefs," and similar "unromantic but far more important matters of national interest." It is also plain sense on the part of the Officers' Federation, though it does not like the present constitution of the National Maritime Board, to prefer trying to amend it to scrapping the existing methods and starting all over again on the basis of an attempt to assimilate the merchant service to the Royal Navy. But conditions of service are not the only point of the demand for an inquiry. Inquiry is required into the whole position of the merchant navy in war to meet the conditions of peace-time competition.

Man Power *(by a Parliamentary Correspondent)*

This was Bevin's week in the House. For the first time since he entered Parliament he has shown himself able to handle the House effectively. On Tuesday over the Oxford Group he had a cast-iron case, in the presentation of which he impressed Members by his impartiality. In replying to the Man-power debate he was conciliatory; he could afford to be. A devastating case could have been made out in regard to the lack of any clear principle in planning the use of man-power; but the principal critics, including Shinwell, Clement Davies and Hore-Belisha, were all silent for a sufficient reason. The Prime Minister, who is an astute politician, killed the debate before it started by announcing that major issues could only be raised in secret session. As a result the debate as such was a fiasco. Members were left as deeply concerned about the twin problems of production and man-power as they were before.

Megan Lloyd George in by far the ablest speech in the debate, faced the major issues. Now that Russia was fighting with us we had for the first time superiority in military man-power. Russia's loss of productive capacity with the possibility that she would lose more, meant that we should concentrate on production first. Davidson, who followed Megan Lloyd George, demanded an explanation of the strategy upon which the allocation of man-power was based. The country was deeply disturbed on the subject. Silkin showed considerable courage when challenged by Bevin to state, as a Labour man, whether wages should be settled by the Government or by negotiation between the Trade Unions and employers. He said bluntly that the Trade Unions had surrendered other principles for the war, and he saw no reason why they should not permit the Government to settle wages in the same way if the war effort would benefit.

Throughout the debate there was considerable criticism of the misuse of man-power, especially skilled man-power, by the Army. Sir Ralph Glynn used his experience as a member of the Select Committee on National Expenditure to deal with this question with considerable effect. Megan Lloyd George also raised the question. She dwelt upon the way in which the Germans had created a dual-purpose army, from which large numbers of men were demobilised to work in the factories during the quiet periods between campaigns. While Bevin said the question of a dual-purpose army was under consideration the Cabinet was determined not to break up the army by releasing men for production. How sound this point of view is must remain an open question. As one Member said after the debate, casualties might cut formations even more seriously. Yet in spite of such losses formations must maintain themselves as fighting entities.

Paper Rationing

In its reduced form and its smaller type, THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION retains this week almost all its familiar features. We regret for the time being to give up the Week in the City, which in any case could not in time of war maintain all the lustre of its brilliant past. A number of suggestions have reached us. One ingenious reader urges us to reorganise our circulation on a basis of multiple subscriptions, which might be a good idea if we were not already aware that almost every copy of THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION is read by half a dozen people, usually passed on to a second household, commonly finding a final home overseas. Our evidence would suggest that the actual regular readership of this journal is in the realm of a quarter of a million. Other readers provide us with examples of wasted paper. One statistician easily calculates that all the extra supplies needed by the weekly reviews are less than the newsprint used by a single widely circulated paper in advertising products, some of which are deleterious, some of which we are asked to consume as little as possible in wartime, and some of which are unobtainable.

Since paper rationing began we have urged our readers to place a definite order for this journal. This advice was repeated last week as an absolute necessity, since we have to stabilise though not reduce our present circulation. Several readers have complained that their newsagents cannot increase their supplies and therefore cannot accept fresh orders. If readers will offer a definite order to a newsagent who has supplied them in the past there should be no difficulty, but if any is experienced please send information to the Publisher, 10 Great Turnstile, High Holborn, London, W.C.1.

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RELIGION IN RUSSIA

How intimately and for how long can a republic with the traditions and social structure of the United States contrive to co-operate as a quasi-ally with Soviet Russia? The question is urgent, though it also opens out a long and difficult perspective. When Hitler attacked the U.S.S.R. he no doubt anticipated a reaction in the United States. Mr. Churchill in his superb and opportune broadcast did much to counter the ebb of American sentiment. But to-day we find Mr. Roosevelt still compelled to take account of the use which isolationists make of the German-Soviet war.

He has so far respected the sentiment of capitalist America towards Communist Russia, that he has not given her the benefit of the Lease-Lend Act. He proposes to do so in the future, but he will first have to face an attempt in Congress to exclude her from its facilities. To us, still struggling for survival, this differentiation seems perversely unrealistic, for the good reason that the Russians, whatever their social and economic creed may be, are doing at the moment incomparably more than any other Power to stop Hitler. But Americans, take them as a whole, are not yet sufficiently alive to their own danger to reason in this direct way. To most of them Russia seems to be hardly less clearly their ideological opposite than Nazi Germany. She is the victim of a treacherous aggression and the gallant enemy of their enemy. But these are somewhat narrow and opportunist grounds for that sympathy which should unite partners in a common cause—a sympathy which among us even an Archbishop of Canterbury can express.

No simple generalisation will cover the complex facts about the American attitude to Russia. The Left, meaning the decided New Dealers and groups vaguely called "liberals," were, a few years ago, friendly and curious about the new Russian way of life. Justifiably they were proud that Russian technicians took America as their model. Stalin's purges, the Russo-German pact and the attack on Finland inevitably cooled their sympathy. The average man, with the *simpliste* outlook of most average men, was content three months ago to say that he "saw no difference" between one dictatorship and another. By that he meant, if he belonged to the middle or working classes, that Russia is not a democracy as the Atlantic civilisation has understood that word for some three hundred years. But the word "democracy" has in America a deeply ambiguous meaning. For "liberals" and the unprivileged it connotes chiefly free debate, civil rights and some effective form of representative government. For Big Business and its satellites it means primarily the system of private enterprise and production for profit, nominally competitive. Hitler, for this stratum of American society, is the enemy, because he subjected business enterprise ruthlessly to the State, controlled it, used it, subjugated it, while leaving it the figment of ownership without rights. The Nazis, for these "democrats," were even more deadly enemies than the Russians, since their armed doctrine is aggressive and the better armed of the two. Finally, the Catholics must be considered separately. Many, but not all of them, cared so little for democracy (in the former and liberal sense of the word) that they looked on Franco as their paladin. The Soviet Union was for them Anti-Christ, less perhaps because of the Communist attitude to the native Russian Church than because Moscow had always been at loggerheads with the Catholic Poles and Uniate Ukrainians within her territories.

Very skilfully this many-headed opposition, whether under native or German inspiration, has now concentrated its attack on Russia round the charge of religious persecution. Liberals are uneasy, and Mr. Roosevelt, the politician, is sensitive to Catholic opinion. Some Protestant Churches, notably the Baptists, are also critical, because their protégés, the Mennonites, stubborn, pacifist nonconformists of German origin, have had, and still have, their difficulties. Challenged at one of his press conferences, the President replied, truly enough, that the Soviet Constitution fully recognises religious liberty. He has since commissioned Mr. Harriman to talk the matter over with Stalin. There is evidently some connection between bombers and Baptists.

The fact is that the exercise of any and every cult, Muslim or Buddhist, Catholic or Orthodox, is free and unhampered in Soviet Russia. Any visitor can see for himself that the churches are crowded, not only in Moscow, but in small towns also. The Communist Party of course rejects every form of revealed religion. The same thing was true of many of the founding fathers of the United States: Washington, Jefferson, Benjamin Franklin and many more were rationalists and Deists. But history compelled the Russian Revolution to fight its organised Church, a necessity which the American Revolution escaped. Of all Christian faiths this Eastern Church was the most obscurantist, and the most tightly bound to the old despotism and the obsolete social structure. It had either persecuted or repressed every other creed, and its faith had little bearing on conduct. Inevitably bishops and priests suffered with their lay patrons in the bloody Civil War. But even when armed resistance was crushed, the priest was often in every village the rallying point of the inert, conservative opposition of the elder generation of illiterate peasants. Every innovation, even in tillage and agricultural technique, was opposed by the pious fatalism of these men as contrary to God's will. If this was religion, then religion had to be fought, and the Communists did it with some understanding of the mind of these unlettered peasants whom they had to drag out of the Dark Ages. I watched them at work in the villages in 1920. They would stage a dramatic exposure of some saintly charlatan's miracle and then follow it up with some popular lessons in natural science. I attended a public debate between an Orthodox priest and an atheist lecturer in a provincial town, conducted with perfect freedom and even with courtesy. All the time the Communists were conscious that they were fighting famine; for they could not have contrived to feed Russia, save by winning the militant co-operation of the younger generation against the inertia of the elder peasants, who clustered more than ever round the Church after Tsar and landlord had vanished.

For the rest, it must be plainly said that the Communists will no more tolerate a clericalist opposition than they tolerate a liberal, or a Trotskyist, or any other organised opposition. Priests under the earlier constitution were disfranchised, as all "malignants" were after our own Civil War. That is no longer the case, but every use of the Church, however slight or indirect, for political ends, is forbidden and punished. The Catholic Church, needless to say, stands on an incomparably higher intellectual and moral level, but it is the Church of the Polish landed aristocracy, or in its Uniate branch of the separatist Ukrainian *kulaks*. The quarrel, which led to some impolitic executions of leading priests, was one of class, or of nationalism, rather than of religion in the strict sense of the word.

For Christians the controversy, in so far as it is honest and well informed, turns chiefly on Education. The Churches may maintain no schools of their own, not even Sunday schools. Russian children may attend public worship, and of course they may receive individual instruction in their parents' faith. But in the Soviet schools, the instruction is dogmatically rationalist. Literature tinged with religious feeling is banned as counter-revolutionary. These are the facts: to discuss them adequately in a few lines is impossible. Ideally speaking it is wrong to fetter a child's mind with the dogmas of either camp before its reasoning powers are fully developed. Yet only by teaching science and history can its mind be developed. Can these be taught without a bias? Doubtfully, in this, or any other country; Russia makes no such claims. Communists believe that tolerance of heresy can only begin when a basic of rational Communistic doctrine is generally accepted. The more liberals know of Russian history, the less will they incline to throw stones. The best hope for the growth of a wider intellectual toleration in Russia is that she should emerge from this war victorious. Her excessive dread of internal opposition has always been linked with her sound suspicions of the external enemy.

H. N. BRAILSFORD

SCUM OF THE EARTH

"In those days the European Continent had already reached a stage where a man could be told without irony that he should be thankful to be shot and not strangled, decapitated, or beaten to death.

A fairly high percentage of the Continent's population had become quite accustomed to the thought that they were outcasts. They could be divided into two main categories: people doomed by the biological accident of their race and people doomed for their metaphysical creed or rational conviction regarding the best way to organise human welfare. The latter category included the progressive *élite* of the intelligentsia, the middle classes, and working classes in Central, Southern and Eastern Europe. . . . The standard of comparison in the treatment of human beings having crashed to unheard-of depths, every complaint sounded frivolous and out of place. The scale of sufferings and humiliations was distorted, the measure of what a man can bear was lost. In Liberal-Centigrade, Vernet was the zero-point of infamy; measured in Dachau-Fahrenheit it was still 32 degrees above zero. In Vernet beating-up was a daily occurrence; in Dachau it was prolonged until death ensued. In Vernet people were killed for lack of medical attention; in Dachau they were killed on purpose. In Vernet half of the prisoners had to sleep without blankets in 20 degrees of frost; in Dachau they were put in irons and exposed to the frost. . . ."

I quote this passage from Arthur Koestler's *Scum of the Earth* (Cape, 7s. 6d.), the final section of which appeared in this paper on September 13th. It is the third of a great trilogy of books which describe and explain some of to-day's accumulation of human suffering. It has not the qualities which give *Darkness at Noon* and the prison section of the *Spanish Testament* a permanent place in British literature, though it has passages as moving and profound as any in Koestler's previous work. It is rather a fine piece of straight reporting. Koestler, a Hungarian by birth, was working with his friends in the South of France when war broke out; he went to Paris to offer his services in the struggle against the Nazis, was promptly interned and at last dumped in the Vernet concentration camp. Of the treatment of the brave and unfortunate men of many nations there he writes without bitterness; the tale is so bitter that more comment than that in the passage quoted above would be anti-climax. Koestler's details of the indignities heaped on this outcast must be read to be believed; if they are read, they will be believed. It would be wrong to call them inhuman, for they are to-day only characteristic of the behaviour of human beings in every country in Europe where Fascism has won its way. The French variety of Fascism differs from the German; it is even more corrupt, more petty, less thorough, less

murderous and more exasperating. One is reminded in certain passages, particularly in the description of Koestler's friend Mario, of that classic of the last war prison camp in France, *The Enormous Room*. Even in *Scum of the Earth* there is much beauty and occasional laughter. But the irony and the disappointment here are agonising. These men offering their lives to fight for French democracy are destroyed by those they would aid. In many of the incidents there is a kind of lunatic sadism which is sometimes, though not always as in the case of the Nazis, accompanied by a visit from an officer who slashes the faces of the men in his charge with a riding whip.

Koestler's main theme is not with horrors, but with the moral collapse of France. He himself was released from Vernet because he had English friends. Both in prison and out of it he met with a combination of xenophobia, official callousness and frightened brutality which to any other age would have seemed incredible. Never did a book more thoroughly disprove the thesis of the unique malignity of the German people; the authorities in France or any country are capable of all brutalities, once the moral cement that holds the nation together has crumbled. In France, as in Germany, officialdom was ready to use as a scapegoat the racial intolerance which, once let loose, can turn men into beasts. Koestler finally escaped from France by joining the Foreign Legion and, after many strange adventures, found his way to Lisbon in the confusion of Hitler's entry into Paris. He arrived in England to be locked up for six weeks in Pentonville where alone in a dark cell during air raids he says that he found peace, because he suffered not from individual persecution, but from a danger that was common to all. In this still comparatively tolerant country he was freed, and is now working in the Pioneer Corps. I understand he does not complain of that, but to me it seems a strange use to make of one of the outstanding creative writers of our generation.

It is hard to face the facts about mankind, and Koestler's book may depress those who have idly thought that barbarism was confined to Germany. But I close *Scum of the Earth* with a sense of triumph. For Koestler has emerged from his extraordinary and unmerited sufferings, sane, objective and unembittered.

KINGSLEY MARTIN

A LONDON DIARY

WAITING for the exchange of sick and wounded British and German prisoners was like expecting someone to strike a match in the black-out. We knew that it could be no more than a glimmer, that there would be a moment of sanity—a warm moment when we could see each other's faces. But even that moment has been denied to us. The *Dinard* and the *St. Julien* are not to sail unless, after many more negotiations, the Germans change their mind. The prisoners in both countries go back to their camps, their friends and relatives are deprived of the chance of caring for those they love. From the military point of view, the thing is quite absurd for none of these men could fight again. Just why the Germans put obstructions in the way I cannot quite tell, unless it was objection to admitting the validity of any Geneva Convention. Previous objections, such as the pretext that no neutral country existed as a half-way house and that it was impossible to arrange transport, came from the German side and so did the final refusal to consider any but a "man for man" exchange. The Geneva Convention of 1919 speaks entirely of categories, and its signatories never suggested numerical balance, seeing that the prisoners exchanged would be, from the military point of view, a handicap and not an advantage, merely mouths to feed and bodies to nurse. This is the British case. But I find much disquiet about the War Office handling of the affair. Captain Margesson's explanation leaves much obscure. To make public the place and to move the prisoners before the details were finally settled was to invite disappointment and suffering for the prisoners and their families. I think also it was penny-wise, pound foolish, of of the B.B.C. to use the intervals between the messages for the most aggressive sort of propaganda to Germany. The Germans filled the intervals with music.

* * *

Most of the speakers in Tuesday's debate about the eleven Buchmanites were more passionate than enlightening. Mr. Mathers (deplorably diffuse), Sir George Courthope, Major Cazalet, and Dr. Little spent most of their time orating about the value of religion—which no one was attempting to deny. Petty-Officer A. P. Herbert suggested that many Buchmanites were tinged with Fascism, which was not the point at issue. Mr. Bevin, on the other hand, was precise: his ministry had decided to exempt men "engaged whole-time, since before September, 1939, by a recognised religious body in religious work analogous to that of a regular minister"; the Y.M.C.A. and Toc H, though religious organisations, were not considered by his ministry "religious bodies" and had patriotically accepted this decision; the fact that the Buchmanite Group was registered as a company did not make it any more a religious body than the Y.M.C.A. or Toc H. This argument appears to me unanswerable. Dr. Buchman himself has declared that he has no intention to form a new religious body, and certainly the Group is not an old religious body. It is a group of like-minded persons who retain their allegiance to a variety of churches. If these evangelists are to be exempted, let it be as members of their several denominations, at the request of these denominations, and on the guarantee that they were before September, 1939, engaged by them whole-time in religious work. A man can belong to two clubs, but not to two political parties or two religious bodies.

* * *

Scotland, I think, is ahead of England in organising these Unity with Soviet Russia campaigns. I saw something of the organisation both in Edinburgh and Glasgow last week-end. Many people talked to me about the meetings of the previous week-end, when Frank Owen and Michael Foot of the *Evening Standard* had shown that eloquence of speech is not incompatible with journalistic vigour. The chief speaker at the meeting on Saturday afternoon in Edinburgh was Eric Baume, a forcible democratic journalist who was described to me as a sort of "Australian version of Quentin Reynolds." Like Reynolds, he has a good voice and a tough line of talk. He shows in all he says the irritation of the vigorous pioneer country for our nice hesitations and ladylike traditions. It was a good meeting of delegates from many organisations, business-like and determined, not eager and idealistic as in the days of the Spanish war. As I got out of the train in Glasgow on Sunday a long "Defend Leningrad" procession was passing. Many organisations, Labour, Trades Council, Co-operative, Communists and others were parading the streets on their way to a demonstration. It was more gay than a similar demonstration in London because so many organisations had their own Scottish bands. Perhaps the most unusual to a Sassenach's eye was a band of girls in Highland costume, led by a young woman who wielded her baton with an enjoyment in the display which reminded me not so much of the usual gusto of the drum-major, as of a dancer whom I once saw in Montmartre. In Glasgow, Edinburgh and Kilmarnock I also spoke to meetings of the Fabian Society. The Glasgow one filled a cinema and they were all of them large and serious. The Fabians, indeed, both in this country and in Scotland are getting a new lease of life. In England the impe given at this year's Summer School by Mr. C and Mr. Gollancz has not slackened. Peo who are disillusioned with Labour in office w an independent Socialist body to restate th principles for them and to give them some ho for the future. Another sign of this new spi of political fervour is the International You Rally to be held on Saturday, October 11th, the Albert Hall. This is an entirely non-pa affair; the sponsors include well-known peop of very various political affiliations.

* * *

Twenty-four persons summoned from vario parts of the county of Cambridge assembled the Shire Hall, Chesterton, on one day of la week (October 3rd). Service was required fro them as jurors. Two unfortunate persons wh failed to answer to their names were each fine £2. Counsel, witnesses, shorthand writer al attended. The quarter sessions of the peace fo the county were fixed to begin at 10.30. Actuall they began at 11.20. Two young soldier pleaded guilty to larceny and were bound over no jury, of course, was called upon. The onl other case was that of an elderly man who wa alleged to have stolen six and eightpence worth of growing onions. When the case came on, th persons waiting to serve as jurors were al ushered out of the court while a legal argumen took place, the contention of counsel being tha the offence is only triable summarily and canno be tried on an indictment. It was not altogethe the fault of the court below, for they had evi dently relied upon a well-known legal textbook the editor of which in summarising the law with regard to stealing any cultivated root used for the food of man or beast, had omitted an im portant qualification. So the alleged onion stealer, who had been kept in custody meanwhile, was told that the proceedings against him were quashed, no jury was empanelled, and the ladies and gentlemen summoned to serve were dis charged with the thanks of the county for their unperformed services. An estimate of the aggregate wasted time at quarter sessions, assizes and the like, would be interesting.

* * *

No paper that I have seen (writes a correspondent) reported a statement by Mr. Richard Allen, of the American Red Cross, made at the British Association Conference on the last day of its sitting. Mr. Allen, after describing his experiences during the last eighteen months in France, Belgium, and some other countries, said that in France last year the German conquerors denuded the hospitals of their supplies—a part of his speech which was reported—but went on to add that medical and hospital supplies had now been distributed to French hospitals by the American Red Cross, and that this work had been done, to quote his own words, "quite alongside the German army. We enjoyed a splendid co-operation from them. They did not take any of the supplies which we intended for the French." Something to the good.

* * *

When a racket becomes intolerable Lord Woolton always promises to stop it. Perhaps on this occasion we shall really see the end of these bogus food substitutes? I hope so. The Ministry in general maintains its habit of offending interests as little as possible and improvising when necessity arises. Lord Woolton, I agree, has a particularly difficult job; it was of another Minister that I recently heard a subordinate remark that he was so good at improvisation that he could even improvise ways out of the muddles caused by his last improvisation. In a problem as complicated as food in a country which maintains a private enterprise system and then tries to control the distribution, it would take more knowledge and more elasticity than civil servants usually have to prevent waste, rackets, and confusion. Let me quote a tiny example which is causing much unnecessary inconvenience at the moment

I hope Lord Woolton can put it right. I understand that no more "wrapped" bread and therefore no more cut bread is to be sold because of the waste of wrapping paper and other things involved. But in making this decision the Ministry made no exception for canteens, Y.M.C.A.s, etc., which saved an immense amount of labour by having their bread for sandwiches ready cut. At the moment, a friend who works in such an institution tells me, new staff is urgently required for the totally unnecessary job of cutting up loaves in scores of canteens while the bread-cutting machinery stands idle at the bakeries. Not an insoluble problem, I should have thought.

CRITIC

THIS ENGLAND

A 5/- prize for the first entry in this column goes to Kenneth E. Brown.

Paste entries on postcard or slip of paper and ... details of origin. Address to THIS ENGLAND, 10 Great Turnstile, W.C.1.

It has been good news to an immense number of people to learn on the highest authority that Her Majesty the Queen does not smoke.—*Christian Herald.*

Gentleman, middle-aged, in business in Tamworth, Requires APARTMENTS, about ¾ mile out of Tamworth. Homely; no objections if widow, as long as clean and comfortable.—Advt. in *Tamworth Herald.*

After listening to the broadcast version of *Saint Joan* I would like to say how disappointed I was. The voice of Constance Cummings was surely not a bit like the voice of a village maid—it has a definite American accent.—Letter in *Radio Times.*

Eight Brighton clergymen concealed from view will represent the Voice of God when the sixteenth century Spanish morality play *The Theatre of the World* is produced in a Brighton Church next week.—*South Wales Echo.*

It is the happiness and the privilege of those who save to carry on the torch of civilisation. But for them we should soon be on the way back to barbarism, and would, within a few centuries, be clad in sheepskins, living in dens or caves in the woods. The poor have only themselves to blame for their poverty. By their inability to control their appetites and desires they have made themselves the willing slaves of the rich or unwilling; but this is another story.—Letter in *Glasgow Herald.*

Behind the bandage tied across her eyes the heart of Bridget stirred in protest.—*The First Stone*, novel by Margaret Peterson.

CHILDREN WHO WENT

A YEAR ago, in mid-blitz, I escaped for a Sunday walk. Two small boys met me in a country lane, and we fell into talk. "You're from London; is it very bad?" "It's better now we've got the guns." "Do you know if it's very bad in Shoreditch? Our Mom's in Shoreditch," said the elder, turning a haunted white face on me. What could one do but lie, and tell him not to worry, because if anything happened to his Mom he would hear at once? Whenever I think of the evacuated children, I remember that boy's eyes; which is absurd, for they have no cause to be anxious most of the time, and plenty of them are very happy. Yet stay or go, the children are first-line sufferers in total war. Those who go lose their homes, and most do not replace them with the organised substitute of the boarding-school; they go to billets which may suit them, and which they may suit —or contrariwise. Except in the roughest of of general outline, by reckoning the number which remain evacuated, it is impossible to say whether the scheme has succeeded, apart from its primary purpose of saving life. Even the teacher's knowledge, which added together must be encyclopaedic, is not a reliable guide as given by individuals; for some are so good and so able that they themselves have ensured the successful colonisation of their pupils; while others are accused of refusing to do a hand's turn for them out of lesson-hours. This dispersal and inaccessibility of knowledge renders *The Cambridge Evacuation Survey** especially valuable. It is a composite affair, with nine authors and three editors; but the name of the chief editor, Susan Isaacs, guarantees its reliability and its expertise in child psychology. There were advantages in studying the evacuation in Cambridge: billeting had been carefully prepared, and there were a body of interested officials, and skilled voluntary workers. There were disadvantages too; Cambridge is not the country; indeed Tottenham children compared its commons unfavourably with the parks of North London. The period of the inquiry covered November, 1939, to March, 1940. Two batches of children were examined: 373 from Tottenham, and 352 from Islington, a poorer London borough. Children without parents only were included, for there was no doubt about the evacuation of mothers with babies; it was a flat failure. Even the unaccompanied children did not all settle down; a quarter of the Tottenham and a half of the Islington children returned home—their parents were questioned to find out why. It transpired that there were three main reasons: the children were homesick and their parents longed for them; there were difficulties with foster-parents; and the expense of keeping them away was too heavy for poor families. The inquiry regarding the children who remained away brought into sharp relief the importance of character and personal relations; brains, social standing, money, housing, and even food, mattered far less. When the foster-parents and the children took to each other all was well. But some noisy and social children allotted to quiet, correct people might stifle, and do much better transferred to rougher surroundings. On the other hand, reserved and day-dreaming children did best where they were left largely to their own devices. The under-thirteens settled much more happily than the older children; but as the editors of this book say, adolescents are often unhappy and tiresome in their own families, let alone abroad. The problems of dirt, infestation, and bed-wetting turned up in Cambridge as elsewhere: the last proved in most cases to be nervous upset; in some, lack of training or fixed habit; the editors point out that it might have been expected, and should in such a large migration have been provided for. The unhappily billeted seemed to total less than 9 per cent.: an extraordinarily small proportion, and a tribute to the skill in billeting and the kindness of the foster-parents. The Cambridge committee make some definite recommendations: that it is very important to organise recreation, since children miss not only accustomed town pleasures like the movies, but also "Dad's shed where I did metal work"; and "cooking classes" for the girls. They add that a hostel where badly placed children can be kept till transfer is an extraordinary help, and that the salary of a child psychologist would richly repay itself.

The committee tried to test the feelings of the children themselves. They collected them at school, without warning, and gave them half-an-hour to write on "What I like in Cambridge," and "What I miss in Cambridge." The answers, analysed, showed considerable agreement: both boys and girls mostly liked rivers, fens, commons, colleges, foster-parents, play-centres and school. The highest numbers for things missed were parents and relatives easily first, followed by friends, home school, home activities, pets, ice-hockey (boys). The literary masterpiece I consider liveliest is that of an eight-year-old:

"Things I like in Cambridge: Cauliflower, Sweets, Country Walks, Pets, Apples." Many children missed London noises, like tubes and lorries. A boy of eight wrote: "I miss the barage berlloons as well." Civil to the colleges, civil to the churches: warm about the Vicar. "I like the vicar. I like him because he is kind to me," writes a seven-year boy; warm about the undergraduates who entertained them. Some like "a bed to myself"; some were cold in bed, poor mites. A number miss freedom, to go out at night, to make a mess, the "liberty of the house." Some like their foster-parents. "What I like best in Cambridge is my hostess." Some do not. "I miss somebody happy in the house." A thirteen-year-old girl: "I have a lovely time in my billet, and never have time to think of my sorrows." A ten-year-old: "I do not like the stew my foster-parent makes. I do not like getting lost in the town. I do not like going to bed early and I don't like having to go out to play when I don't want to." "I really miss everything in general"—how well one recalls that hollow aching of the heart! A contented boy of fourteen, who liked the people in the billet, the colleges, swimming, the school gymnasium, and his friends, wrote: "I only miss Mum and Dad and my sister and relations most, and few friends that have stayed behind. Also just my house. I am so happy I miss nothing else whatsoever. Except the school rules of not running in the playground."

Cambridge did not offer the true country which for many town children turns life from routine into an entrancing, hard-worked adventure. On the whole, the moral to be drawn from this survey seems to me to be an old one. Children need good food and lots of love. Nothing can really supply love except their families. The bitterness of exile is as enduring, and as nearly unendurable, as any human grief: children should not have to bear it. ALISON GRAHAM.

*The Cambridge Evacuation Survey. Edited by Susan Isaacs. (Methuen 8s. 6d.)

THREE WOMEN

(After Charles Kingsley)

THREE women went working at Bevin's request
To keep our production from going down,
Their husbands stood watching, extremely depressed,
And their children ran wild all over the town.
But women must work if men must go
Though the hours be long and the wages be low
And the T.U.C. be moaning.

Three women from workshops went home for a rest
While the House debated, on woman-power,
Three countries kept looking for help from the West
And the sands were falling hour by hour,
For we must go fast while others go slow
Though the hours be long and the wages be low
And the T.U.C. be moaning.

The Cabinet's weeping and wringing its hands,
While the foes advance and the Commons frown,
Though women have pep-talks and dinner-time bands
The wind is up and the output down.
But women must work lest Ministers go
Though the hours be long and the wages be low
And the T.U.C. be foaming.

SAGITTARIUS

AUSTRALIA'S LABOUR GOVERNMENT

[The author of this article was until recently Principal Information Officer in the Australian department of Information, and is now a member of the London staff of Truth Newspapers, of Australia and New Zealand, and of the *Daily Mirror*, Sydney.]

In Australian politics events have moved with rather bewildering rapidity. Five weeks after the resignation of Mr. Menzies as Prime Minister, and the appointment of Mr. Fadden as his successor, the Commonwealth has a third Prime Minister in Mr. John Curtin. He leads the first Labour administration to hold office in the Federal Parliament since 1932.

Behind these dramatic moves lies the clash of individuals, once again emphasising that in Australian politics personalities are even more important than policies. The eclipse of Mr. Menzies, although it was inexplicable to Englishmen, came as no surprise to Australians. Mr. Menzies in England and Mr. Menzies in Australia were two distinct individuals. The atmosphere of England was more congenial to him than the atmosphere of Australia. He came here with all the prestige of the representative of the Commonwealth, of a young, virile, self-governing dominion. His breadth of vision, his faculty for clear, logical thinking, his sympathetic understanding, his frank but kindly criticism, his forthrightness—these were the qualities which appealed to the English public and stamped him as a statesman of outstanding ability. He brought with him into the crowded, more restricted atmosphere of England a pungent breath from the wide open spaces of Australia's limitless outback.

In Australia, however, Mr. Menzies was never silhouetted against such an arresting background. In a country where every citizen is inherently and incorrigibly a critic, and where forthright speaking is a commonplace, he never appeared as such a striking or forcible personality. His tall, broad-shouldered figure was regarded rather as the symbol of a partisan political party than as the symbol of the unity, strength and virility of a nation. His great qualities, those same qualities which earned him the admiration and respect of Great Britain and, to a lesser extent, of the United States, were dwarfed, in Australia, by his surroundings and negatived by his inability to free himself from the entangling net of party and parochial politics. Mr. Menzies's political background, and his personal aloofness, proved grave disabilities, and prevented him from winning widespread popularity. Political astuteness and showmanship, the ability to win popularity by artifice and manoeuvre, were never among his attributes.

His lack of political tact created extraordinary difficulties for him within his own Cabinet and party. He had continuously to face the intrigues and manoeuvres of malcontents, and, holding office by only the slenderest of majorities in the House, he in the end had to bow to his critics. He was too much the statesman, too little the politician, to stand up against them.

The selection of Mr. Fadden as his successor was a last-minute effort to save the Government by placing at its head a more popular figure and a cleverer political tactician. Speaking the language of the people and personally more acceptable to Labour than Mr. Menzies, Mr. Fadden had risen in public estimation while acting Prime Minister during Mr. Menzies's visit abroad. But he came into office too late to save the Government, and, more immediately fatal, he had had a violent quarrel during Mr. Menzies' absence with Mr. Coles, an independent and former Lord Mayor of Melbourne. Mr. Coles, on his return from England, publicly propounded an all-in war policy for Australia, and he and Mr. Fadden entered into an acrimonious public controversy regarding the merits and demerits of this plan. Mr. Coles was an admirer of Mr. Menzies, and would never serve under Mr. Fadden. Thus, once again, it was the clash of personalities which defeated Mr. Fadden.

Labour comes into power at a very opportune moment. Increasing public support for Labour throughout Australia has arisen rather from the political blunders of the Government than from general acceptance of Labour's policy. It springs directly from the universal desire of the Australian people to make their war effort as complete and efficient as is humanly possible. Of recent months, despite the notable achievements in armaments and munition production, there has been much criticism that Australia's effort has fallen short, and that there are too many people not directly participating in the war effort. This criticism has engendered a feeling that Labour might prove more capable in organising the country on an all-in basis.

Mr. Curtin's political future, however, is by no means assured. He will be compelled to depend upon the co-operation of the two independents, Mr. Coles and Mr. Wilson, and of the Members of the previous Government. He does not enjoy a clear-cut majority in the House, and he faces a hostile majority of two in the Senate. Previous history has shown how the Senate can wreck a Government. If it rejects a measure, three months must elapse before that measure can be resubmitted to the Senate, and, with Labour policy in regard to finance differing so radically from that of the United Australia and Country parties, it is unlikely that the Senate will agree to the sweeping monetary reforms which Labour advocated at the general elections. Thus, the Senate can make Mr. Curtin's position quite untenable. If he is prepared to compromise on certain aspects of Labour's policy, refraining from bringing forward its more far-reaching reforms and modifying some of its other proposals, Mr. Curtin will be able to hold office; for after having received twelve months' co-operation from Labour, Mr. Fadden can hardly now refuse to extend the same measure of co-operation to Mr. Curtin.

Within the Labour caucus, however, there will be strong opposition to compromise from the extremist section led by Dr. Evatt, former justice of the High Court of Australia. He has more than once urged Labour to cease its co-operation with the Menzies-Fadden Government. Last December he and his followers strongly opposed the budget compromise which enabled the Menzies Government to remain in office, but the more moderate counsels of Mr. Curtin were eventually endorsed by the Labour caucus. Recent developments suggest, however, that Dr. Evatt has strengthened his position. His pressure may have caused Labour last week to challenge and defeat the Nationalist Government. It is unlikely that he will now become an advocate of compromise.

The strong probability of an early election may raise afresh the question of the Labour leadership. Many Labour Members, particularly those from New South Wales, would prefer Dr. Evatt to Mr. Curtin. The former's resignation from his remunerative position on the High Court bench in order to enter Parliament gave him remarkable public prestige. Moreover, he has had a brilliant career at the Bar, has long been associated with Labour, and is the author of many historical works. He is the intellectual giant of the party. Ten years younger than Mr. Curtin, he is more fiery, more radical. Hitherto, despite prophecies to the contrary, he has refused to challenge Mr. Curtin for the leadership, but in the event of an election, he might do so. On the other hand, Mr. Curtin is extremely popular with his followers, and has to his credit more than five years' solid work as leader of the Opposition. The very fact that he is a moderate might prove a definite election factor, reassuring the middle-class, which has always doubted Labour's financial policy.

Labour would probably win an election to-day, and would be returned with a small, but comfortable, majority in both Houses. Broad war issues would not be at stake in any election. Labour's accession to office brings no change of general policy, but merely a change of method. All parties in Australia are equally determined to crush Nazism. Although Labour's financial proposals are certain to create acute controversy, the remainder of its policy, which envisages a greater effort in the field of production and more direct participation by Australia in the strategic direction of the war, undoubtedly meets with the general approval of Australians.

HENRY BATESON

WARTIME CULTURE

When Athens was fighting the Peloponnesian war her stage was ennobled by a series of dramas which have been equalled rarely and never surpassed. Sophocles, Euripides and Aristophanes, were in full spate of production. The Antigone was first played just before the outbreak of war; the Oedipus Rex belongs to the first years; the Philoctetes came towards the close. The Medea, the Hippolytus, the Hecuba, the Ion and the Suppliants all appeared in its early years; the great plays of Aristophanes, the Nights, the Cows, the Wasps, the Birds, belong to its middle. Throughout the war Socrates was going actively about his peculiar business.

It is too much perhaps to expect that our own democracy should emulate the feats of the Athenians in this department; even the achievements of our Elizabethan ancestors set a standard whose challenge it is unreasonable to ask us to meet. Nevertheless, it is not unreasonable to expect that *some* distinctive cultural expression should characterise the life of a nation at war. What, then, has been the distinctive cultural expression of the English genius during the years 1939 to 1941? The question is not difficult to answer. The answer is "light music." Turn on your radio at any hour of the day or at almost any hour of the night and your ears will be immersed in an apparently perpetually flowing stream of swing music, jazz music, hot jazz music, crooner music—in fact, of light music. I do not know how many hours of radio entertainment have been devoted to the broadcasting of light music since the beginning of the war, but I do know that if they were set end to end they would stretch from Broadcasting House to the North Pole, and for all I know round the other side of the world back to Broadcasting House.

Of this distinctive emanation of the English spirit I have little experience in its broadcast form, but I have frequently met it in its parallel expression on the stage of the West End. During the last eighteen months, and particularly during the theatrical boom of the last four or five months, a considerable number of revues have graced the boards of the West End stage. Having outgrown the age at which the direct leg-teeth-flesh appeal is found moving, I have tended to gravitate towards the smaller revues at which a few highly talented players season beauty with wit and comment amusingly on the foibles of the day. Such at least is the nature of the fare that one is led to expect; a fare designed to appeal to the educated, the intelligent and the mature, to beguile the relaxation of, let us say, the overworked civil servant taking it easy in the evening.

Considered as a typical expression of the cultural entertainment of our time, the small revue suggests two reflections. With the first we return like the crust-seeking dog, to the subject of light music. Like the B.B.C., these revues are bathed in an almost perpetual stream, but it is music of a most remarkable kind, music

which apparently makes it equally impossible for the actor either to talk or to sing. A sketch or a dialogue is put on and it is going pretty well; one can hear what the performers say—with difficulty, but one can hear it. Suddenly, with what one comes after a time to realise to be a dreadful inevitability, a freshet of music breaks out, and, instead of talking *tout court*, the actors talk through the music, with the result that their words become thereafter inaudible, submerged in the stream. Just as many shy people turn on the radio to save themselves embarrassment or, distrusting their own powers of conversation, to cover its gaps, so actors and actresses in a modern revue are apparently so embarrassed at the sound of their own unaccompanied voices—or is it perhaps at the fatuity of what they have to say?—that everything must be drowned in the same sickly stream.

Sing, I insist, they do not. A song has shape and form. It used to have verses and a chorus. These are of the past, but at least it should have a beginning, an end, a point, and a climax, which means that some parts of it should be distinguishably different from others. But the light music that accompanies these revues obeys none of these conditions. It is a formless, shapeless mass of indistinguishable sound, lacking either pattern or structure, which breaks out suddenly and convulsively like a flux of pus from a sore in order to break in upon every conversation. There is no reason that I can see why it should ever begin; no reason why, having begun, it should ever stop. In fact, it doesn't stop, but dribbles on perpetually, like a leaky shower bath.

It may be said that I am judging the music of the popular revue by an illegitimate standard. But am I? Compare it, for example, with the popular music of the late Victorian and Edwardian ages, or even with the music of the last war. The popular song of the Victorian music-hall was a safety-valve; it purged not with pity and terror, but with laughter and tears. It touched half humorously and half tenderly on the realities of people's lives; upon beer, baccy and the kids, the missis, "my old man," and the rent collector. Incidentally, it threw up a generation of great artistes, Little Tich, Marie Lloyd, Wilkie Bard, George Robey, Harry Lauder, and at its best it had a good tune and a rollicking chorus. In virtue of its tune it stuck in men's minds; people sang it in their baths; errand boys whistled it. Hence it performed the function of a true popular art in being enjoyed by and remembered of the people.

Even the last war, though the great days of the music-hall were past, produced its quota of memorable popular songs. There were the famous, popular songs of the Army—"Tipperary" and "Pack Up Your Troubles"; there were the scarcely less famous songs of the big popular revues. How audiences used to roar the choruses of "Gilbert the Filbert" and "I'm So Glad to See Your Back, Dear Lady." Has this war produced any songs of an equivalent popularity? If so, I have yet to hear them. The charge against the popular music of the time is not only that it is not music, but that it is not popular. It is not of the people, but of the can; being, in fact, the canned music of the Brave New World.

This brings me to my second reflection, which relates to the content of the revues. A revue should be, I suggest, at least in part a vehicle of satire. It should hold up to mockery the follies and castigate the vices of the times. It may be wondered whether the world ever stood in such need of the salutary effects of a dose of satirist's salts. Our follies cry to Heaven for ridicule. What scope Voltaire, for example, would have found in this war of changing ideologies, or Swift in the exhibition of human nature afforded by the impact of evacuees upon their unwilling hosts. No doubt the censor would step in here; but something surely would get through, and my complaint is that by and large nothing does get through to disturb the atmosphere of glazed and facetious gentility pervading the revue stage. In a revue now running in London there are two sketches that indicate very faintly and feebly what might be done. In one, two elderly and ugly women are trying on hats while complaining that those who attend upon them are not called up; in the other a taximan, a railway porter, a waitress and a telephone operator excuse their inefficiency and ill-temper with the refrain, "Don't you know that there's a war on!" Good! But how little of it there is, and how mild that little. For the most part, elegantly dressed young men appear as mock Spanish bullfighters or genteel burglars, while clever actresses expend their talents in guying highbrow music and Chelsea models.

Again, comparison with the last war suggests itself. In the early years of that war there was at the Ambassador's Theatre, a continuous series of revues, shameless under such titles as "Some" or "More," in which just castigation of our follies was made joyous by the wit of two great artistes, Leon Morton and Alice Delysia. At the Palace, Nelson Keyes flayed the war profiteers, explaining to us, with what relish, that work had become the ruin of the drinking classes. Later there was Beatrice Lillie.

I know that as a race we are not very cultivated; that we do not care for music; that we do not like intelligence, and are embarrassed by its manifestations. I know, therefore, that one mustn't expect too much. I know, too, that there is a variety of good music in London—at the moment there is a boom in concerts—and occasionally (very occasionally) in our big provincial towns: but it is music of the past that we listen to, and I am concerned with the particular emanations of English culture in the present. Similarly, we are sometimes permitted to see a great play; but it was not in our time that it was written. I know, then, that we must not expect too much. But need it, one wonders, be quite as flaccid, as pappy, as spineless, as genteel, as utterly lacking in bite, and sauce, and "guts" and distinction as it is? And in case the reader should be tempted to dismiss this article as the splenetic outburst of a disgruntled highbrow, let me remind him that the thing has its serious side. I don't know what truth there may be in the rumour that Goebbels is arranging to rebroadcast some of our "light music" programmes throughout the countries of occupied Europe, so that their peoples should be in no doubt as to the culture of the new English order for which they are asked to revolt, but I have heard it from so many sources, that I, for one, am not inclined to dismiss it. After all, even in Nazi Germany in wartime there are between fifty and sixty opera houses in full song.

C. E. M. JOAD

PLAYING THE GAME

FEELING my way round the world on a wireless set on Sunday evening, I paused as I heard menagerie howls coming from a crowd of human beings who were evidently enjoying themselves at a game of some kind. How much better it is at times to listen to the inarticulate noises that come from the wireless than to the noises that are articulate! Human beings when desperately happy in large numbers tend to become inarticulate. Listen, for example, to the members of the House of Commons when they unite in making the noise falsely represented in the newspapers as "Hear, hear": the joyful cry that issues from hundreds of throats is no nearer articulate speech than the roaring of sea-lions. Great actors and musicians, again, are howled at after their performances with a fury of noise that would be intimidating if it were not known to be well meant. I have listened to many concerts at which I thought the applause of the audience was the most enjoyable part of the programme. I have often turned off music on the wireless, but I have never, except under duress, turned off applause. And to be among the applauders is still better than to hear the applause broadcast through the air. To be in a concert hall at the end of a Paderewski recital forty or fifty years ago, and to see a thousand and more men and women standing up and waving handkerchiefs and shouting and screaming like monsters of the jungle, was to know that life was good.

Applause itself is, I think, a kind of music. Like music, it is an expression of delight in the beautiful and the good that cannot be expressed in words. It might be accused of monotony if too greatly prolonged, and at its best, perhaps, it is as brief as a lyric poem—a fair-sized lyric poem like Shelley's "Skylark" or even Swinburne's "Dolores." But, whatever time it may last, it is indispensable as the speechless speech of extreme happiness. Some modern artists have deprecated applause, but none of them has suggested a substitute for it. And this, I fancy, is because there is no possible substitute for it, as there is no possible substitute for music or painting or poetry. Those who saw Obolensky scoring his two tries against New Zealand at Twickenham a few years ago knew in their bones that the tongue that Shakespeare spoke was a poor instrument for the utterance of the joy they felt at sight of such miracles. It was all stand up, hats off, and yelling till yelling had told Obolensky more of what the world thought of him than Pindar could have told in an ode.

Perhaps it is because I like the noise of applause so much that I have never been greatly drawn to those games that are played in silence. Billiards is a beautiful game to look at, with the light on the green table and the movement of the red and white balls, but the hushed atmosphere in which important matches are played makes the spectator almost afraid to draw breath. Chess, again, is lacking in the spirit of ululation. Nor is bridge much better: it is more like serious money-making than a game. The best card games to my mind are Happy Families, Animal Grab and Snap. At these human beings can become inarticulate or almost inarticulate. At these the human being expresses his brotherhood with the beautiful creatures in the Zoo.

As we grow older, unfortunately, we become ashamed of making inarticulate noises except at some outdoor games and in concert halls and theatres. Noisiness is frowned on in the young, and at an early age we accept the decree of our elders that we must not go about the world shouting and yelling as we should do if we behaved naturally. The repression of noise is one of the conspicuous repressions of civilisation. Who knows how much happiness this has cost our race? Children, if unreproved, aim at making a deafening tumult. I heard the other day three little girls and a still smaller boy on their way home from school doing their best to destroy the peace of the countryside by singing at the top of their voices a chorus that began:—

> Glory, glory hallelujah!
> Teacher hit me with a ru-lah.

And no farmyard noises could have been pleasanter. Other children do not even trouble to find words to accompany the music of their voices. They expand their lungs and yell. Yet in a few years all these happy boys and girls will be turned into model little citizens who will walk along country roads as silently as if they were playing bridge. One of the ecstasies of life will have gone for ever unless they are lucky enough to become concert-goers or enthusiastic spectators of outdoor games.

Perhaps the best of all games at which to recover the primitive delight of inarticulate uproar is Association football. An Association

football crowd seems to me beyond any other collection of human beings to have gift for maintaining an incessant tide of roaring from the beginning of a game to the end. There are pauses of silence at Rugby football, even in the great games at Twickenham, but at an Association match the enthusiast would feel that he was a traitor to his side if he gave more than a few seconds' rest to his throat or the buzzer that he waves so widly in his hand. Boxing, when it is exciting, causes almost as continuous and as noisy a frenzy; but at boxing the shouting often becomes articulate, and in the cheaper seats you hear such vivid phrases as "Knock his block off!" Cricket for some reason does not call out the best of the spectators' lung-power. Occasionally one hears strangled yells of "Owzat?" but for the most part enthusiasm expresses itself genteelly in the clapping of hands. Animal frenzy does not find expression till the end of the game, and seldom finds it even then.

One of the games that I have long wished to see because of the uproarious way in which the spectators behave at it is baseball. From all I can hear baseball is a game during which it is almost impossible for a spectator to make use of human speech. The only game I ever saw was an exhibition game played fifty years ago in a city that had never seen it before and did not know the rules, so that we sat through it like a lot of Buddhist monks looking at a cricket match for the first time. And I do not call that seeing baseball. Certainly, it was not hearing baseball. I doubt, indeed, whether it is possible to see or hear the game except in America. Those cheers that I heard on the wireless on Sunday night were cheers from an American baseball match, and their vibrations across the Atlantic made me realise how good a game it is. So far as I could gather the match was an important one, and the two sides were the Brooklyn Dodgers and the Yankees. When I tuned in to it, the Dodgers were leading by five runs—I think that is how the score goes—to three, and before I had listened for long I was so caught up in the excitement of the game that I was making a bet of an even shilling on the Yankees. Excitement did not die down even in the intervals between one innings and the next, when the commentator, in the same desperate voice in which he described the game, called on us, if we wanted a perfect shave, to use razor-blades made by the firm that was sponsoring the broadcast. I could not follow the game or see it in my mind's eye, but even in my ignorance I could share a part of the passions of the crowd. There was a player called Casey, whose performance gave me particular pleasure: he was referred to as Casey the pitcher. I am not sure whether he was a Dodger or a Yankee, but he was probably a Yankee, since, when the Yankees scored two more runs and then two more, the announcer described him in his exultation as the Man of the Hour. And, as you listened, you could scarcely doubt that Casey actually was the Man of the Hour.

To one part of one's brain it seemed odd enough that in October, 1941, when the world has reached what may be the supreme crisis in the history of civilisation, a baseball player should be proclaimed the Man of the Hour. Rudyard Kipling, who denounced cricketers and footballers as fools and oafs during the Boer War, would not have approved of this. And others have shared Kipling's doubt whether an ardent interest in games does not detract from energy in time of war. Does it not involve an isolation from the serious business in which the world is engaged? On the other hand, it is possible that play is as necessary in time of war as in time of peace, and that without relaxation the energy of the ordinary man would not increase but decline. Mr. Winston Churchill, we may be sure, did no less full a day's work on Saturday as a result of his attending the English and Socttish International football match at Wembley. Drake's game of bowls is by general admission not a good precedent for leaders of men in the swift-moving twentieth century; nor, perhaps, was the ball on the eve of Waterloo. But the need of relaxation is probably even greater to-day than it was in the past, and if men did not occasionally relax themselves at games, they would probably be engaged on something worse. Hence let us not grudge Casey his cheers or his title of the Man of the Hour. He was certainly the man of a very pleasant and noisy hour for me.

Y. Y.

THE MOVIES

"Citizen Kane," at the Gaumont.
"Claudine," at Studio One.
"Meet John Doe," at Warner's.

Imagine a *March of Time* reel about one of the representative "great" men of our age. Charles Foster Kane, lately dead, inherited millions, threw over the traces, began newspapers, built opera houses, stared out from hoardings, led crusades that blazed and ended nowhere, banged and banged on the public doors, and then retired, fabulously rich, to a Hearstian castle in Florida called "Xanadu." In the newsreel we see, collected together, the usual moments from this flash-lit life: a wedding group, political tableaux, interviews on the quayside. "How did you find labour troubles in Europe, Mr. Kane?" asks a reporter. Kane considers. "With difficulty," he replies, a fatuous cunning spreading over the much-photographed features.

But the newsreel documentary doesn't satisfy the men who are making it; there must be a story behind this façade of power-seeking; they decide to investigate Kane. *Citizen Kane*, beginning with the newsreel run through in one of the Gothic vaults of "Xanadu," gives the result of their discoveries in a film that dives here and there into the past like a cross between a Pirandello play and *The Search for Corvo*. It knocks the conventional film biography flying. The boredom of the usual time-sequence, with all its attendant clichés, is split up, and when we meet clichés they are devastatingly dealt with. Only one incident, for example, is disinterred from Kane's childhood. When the lawyer comes with news of the inheritance, little Charlie Kane hacks him on the shin. The incident is revealing perhaps as an index of future "greatness," but more remarkable is the manner in which it is presented. In a sequence lasting only a very few minutes we are made to feel the weight of whole years spent in an out-of-the-way low-ceilinged shack; the four figures—the mother's face staring close-up into the camera, the lawyer and the father talking behind, the child frisking outside in the snow—are disposed with a pictorial intensity that not only conveys the facts of the situation, but, as they say of paintings, tells a story. It is a striking composition—in which, by the way, movement and sound play an important part; and it is as vividly memorable as, say, a Camden Town interior by Sickert. This pictorial emphasis, the quality of going always one step beyond the literal use of the camera, is sustained throughout the film: there is another sequence, as remarkable as the one already quoted, which resumes the first of Kane's marriages in a few shots of two people sitting at breakfast over a period of months. Emphasis, by means of a new linking of the close-up with its background and strangely lengthened perspectives, becomes at times a trick of exaggeration, yet even this seems admissible with so rococo a theme. Kane progressing from liberalism to autocracy and madness; Kane penning a front-page declaration of rights, building an opera house and making his wife sing in it; Kane as newspaperman of genius, as power-addict, as an ageing cipher who bellows his privacies through Gothic halls—the ruthlessness of such a life is met by an equally ruthless treatment. From beginning to end, *Citizen Kane* is hard as nails in sentiment; it distorts and brings out a horror in reality, it makes a startling new use of violence both on the eye and the ear. I imagine film directors everywhere will be cribbing from it for years. (The results may be somewhat appalling.) Needless to say it has been a one-man job. Orson Welles directs and takes the chief part, with the support of his own company, the Mercury Players of New York. He knows what he is up to with a vengeance. I urge everyone to see this brilliant, drastic, imaginative and rather terrifying film.

It is long since there has been a new French film in London. Certain qualities may be taken for granted. The voices will be a delight to listen to, and if there are to be clichés they sound better in another language. Then, most if not all of the faces will be fresh: an immense attraction to anyone who haunts the fleapits more than once in a moon. Lastly, there is the strong regional character of French films as of French novels, and landscapes and villages don't all look as though they had come out of Filmlandia. Place and period in *Claudine* have been charmingly realised. We get the aroma of Burgundy 1900, a countryside of rich fields, and woods, humours of a small town, the harvest coming in, summer nights with the frogs croaking, a new doctor arriving in knickerbockers to turn heads in the local girls' school. Most of the scenes are in and round the school, where passions run high; an ageing tyrannic headmistress, a fluffy assistant and Claudine herself form a triangle of affections. This *guerre entre dames*—as relentless as two schoolmarms and their most rebellious pupil can make it—has somewhat softened in transit, and one misses the turbulent life of the Colette original, *Claudine en Ecole*. The Claudine on the screen, delicately played by Blanchette Brunoy, is more prone to lyrical confidences and less to witty torment, more of a wise virgin and less of an adolescent. She falls conventionally in love with a man—the new doctor with a pretty moustache—and this will appeal to the inflexible moralist in every film-goer. Needless to say, the book is more exciting (French novelists have given us all the best pictures of growing up), but I don't want to stress that. Despite some platitudes about adolescence and a rather thin use of the original, *Claudine* makes a lively and at times touching film. The schoolchildren are admirable, with a sprinkling of odd looks and winning ways, and as usual in this type of French film there is some amusing caricature of provincial types.

Meet John Doe is the new Mr. Deeds. Those who enjoyed his progress to Washington (I was one) will be distressed to find him here essaying the slopes of Calvary.

WILLIAM WHITEBAIT

PLAYS AND PICTURES

"Sorotchintsi Fair," at the Savoy

Two casts performing on different nights emphasise the inter-allied character of this production. Among those on the second night were Ermo Simberg, a young singer with a very agreeable light tenor voice; Paul André as a delightful shy-sly philandering peasant, and Kyra Vayne, who both sang charmingly and acted with spirit. As an erring wife she has the advantage over her husband and his cronies of remaining sober. On the whole the *Fair* is a less infectious *Bartered Bird*, with the compensation, however, of Moussorgsky's music. The chief fault of the production, which is gay both to look at and listen to, was that comedy and song were rather divided: some of the singers in a series of situations flimsily strung together were content merely to stand and sing. This made the first act drag a little. The second is full of frolics of the *poltergeist* order, and the third act contains the ballet *Night on the Bare Mountain*, which went with a swing. The orchestra—L.S.O. under Anatole Fistoulari—played well, and, for these days, was lavish indeed.

Concerts of Modern Music at Wigmore Hall

Messrs. Boosey & Hawkes have arranged four concerts of modern chamber music. This shows considerable enterprise at a time when there is no lack of music in London but an insistence on well-worn programmes. The first concert, given last Saturday, contained two first performances: Vaughan Williams' *Household Music*, three preludes for string quartet, in which pastoral was not marred by either the folk-heartiness or dissonantal clash, to which this composer is inclined to give way; and an interesting if not very memorable *Theme and Variations for Piano*, by Bernard Stevens. The other pieces included Honnegger's Second String Quartet, brilliant, over-nervy music in which the expression of ugliness plays a deliberate part; some charming nursery songs by Szymanowski; Debussy's Sonata for Flute, Viola and Harp, and a Debussyist setting of a poem for soprano, harp, violin, viola and 'cello by Falla. The last was delightfully sung by Miss Sophie Wyss, and the standard of playing by the Blech Quartet was excellent throughout. The next concert in this series will be on Saturday, October 18th.

Correspondence

FROM THE FÜHRER'S MOUTH

SIR,—Surely Hitler's last speech is worth more attention than the explosion of vulgar abuse with which it has been received. When he attacked Russia it was pointed out in your columns that the only explanation of this apparently insane step that fitted all the facts was that he was convinced that Russia was only waiting to attack him until he was fully engaged with Britain and the U.S.A., and that it was a matter of life or death for him to vanquish Russia before we were ready to take him on.

He has now told us that this explanation was precisely true. He makes no secret of it; for he still believes that he was right about Russia's intentions, and therefore had no alternative but to dash at her and finish with her before the winter.

This suggests that National Socialism in the Reich is a plutocratic sham, and that Hitler is a figurehead who has no experience of what governing a really Socialist state means. If he had he would have known that Stalin would have gone to the utmost prudent lengths to avoid war and pursue his prodigious work of internal development without interruption or diversion of the Russian national capital from construction to destruction. Hitler clearly believed that Stalin would do exactly what he, Hitler, would have done in Stalin's place: in other words, that Stalin was his other self. No two living men could be less alike, and no two political and economic tactics more different.

But even from Hitler's own point of view it was clearly Russia's interest to make a trade agreement with both belligerents, and maintain strict neutrality while they battered one another to pieces.

I do not think Hitler's figures justify us in calling him a liar. They are not plausible enough for that. Liars always take the greatest pains to be plausible. The reasonable and civil conclusion is that the Führer is kept as carefully misinformed as to his military position as Napoleon III was in 1870. He has evidently no suspicion of his danger in the East. It is not my business to enlighten him; but I will ask our Old School Ties to remember that, like Hitler, they made a howling mistake about Russia, and must be careful not to make the same mistake about India.

From all this I cannot infer that the Führer is quite so long-headed as the people who fear him most imagine. I must point out to them that instead of making the peoples he has subjected glad he came, as Julius Caesar did, he has made the enormous mistake of making no better use of his victories than to raise up implacable enemies behind him as well as before him. Fighting on two fronts, or on half a dozen, is all in the day's work nowadays; but fighting on half a dozen backs is another matter. G. BERNARD SHAW

HUMAN PLANNING

SIR,—There is one conclusion reached by Mr. Tom Harrisson in his article in your issue of September 27th which should not pass unchallenged. It is that community life is on the wane in this country.

Quite recently, we have seen intense communal efforts such as the digging up of an acre of concrete in Bethnal Green to plant potatoes, or the thousand "Neighbours' Leagues" in Leicester, by which the residents in a group of half a dozen streets come together to form stirrup-pump and first-aid parties, and have learned to stay together in groups for the pursuit of interesting hobbies—music, debates and so forth. Again, there is widespread testimony to the increase in neighbourliness caused by people making fresh and welcome contacts in the voluntary civil defence services, fire-watching, etc.

This trend is no war-time product. Examples of it during the years following 1918 are to be seen in the formation of thousands of Women's Institutes in rural areas, and the building of hundreds of village halls. To these there is an urban parallel, of perhaps even more significance in these days, when we are planning new homes for industrial workers who are either bombed out or dispersed to factories in unfamiliar surroundings.

In the twenty years of "peace" some hundreds of new housing estates were built, accommodating nearly a quarter of the population. Until 1937, however, those who planned these estates, with only a very few exceptions, thought of houses only and paid little attention to facilities needed to encourage a community spirit. But between 1937 and 1939 there was a wave of interest in community centres, and over five hundred schemes were on the stocks when war stopped all building.

These schemes were the fruit of years of patient endeavour by residents' associations on these new housing estates to build up a sense of neighbourliness through the formation of groups for the pursuit of common interests—gardening, cycling, amateur drama, wireless discussion circles, clubs for young people. In addition these associations took up with the authorities matters of concern to the whole neighbourhood—transport facilities, provision of recreation grounds, public libraries, clinics, and so forth.

The most important thing about all this work was that it arose from the spontaneous efforts of the people themselves—nearly all manual workers—without any "organisation from above." These groups of residents, Community Associations as they are often called, are cradles of democracy. They encourage their members to be good neighbours, and to manage their own affairs and the affairs of the community.

Let planners take note. The foundation is laid for re-building Britain, and not in terms of bricks and mortar alone. After this war let us see that every neighbourhood gives its citizens the opportunity to develop that community spirit which these and other examples show to exist.

National Council of Social Service, E. SANDFORD CARTER

MERCHANT SEAMEN

SIR,—In your article on Merchant Seamen, you call attention to some remarks made by me, as representing the Manchester School of Shipowners. Do you really blame the shipowner for the large number of craft laid up throughout the world after the war of 1914-18. Did the shipowners declare war? No, it was the Governments—those bodies of men who are prepared to do anything they can to get votes or, in the case of Totalitarian Governments, for their own personal glorification. It is those same gentlemen who now talk of a "New Order." The "New Order" really means more detailed interference with our businesses on the excuse of improving conditions. Will anyone seriously exonerate them for their appalling mistakes of the past, and believe that in future they will do any better? Who formed the League of Nations, and then sat back, allowing our neighbours to arm to the teeth, while we discussed disarmament, headed by Major Attlee with his soft love of internationalism and steady refusal to do anything but obstruct our own self-defence? Who decided to go back to the Gold Standard, and who started up Protection? Are the shipowners to be saddled with the responsibility for the world slump, and all those political moves which have dislocated trade over the last twenty years, and have in fact been responsible for laying up so many ships all over the world by refusing, by these obstructions, to allow us to carry goods to and from this country?

No, I can only imagine that the weak-minded alone would wish for any "New Order" operating without any regard for the laws of nature, such as the survival of the fittest, the law of supply and demand, etc. The result of the last twenty-five years must, at least, show us that the Manchester School of Thought, with a Government to act as arbiter and prevent abuses as soon as they occur, is, at any rate, a very safe haven if we are to regain prosperity after the present war. L. H. CRIPPS

PRODUCTION AND THE WAR EFFORT

SIR,—Maximum production will never be achieved until the control of production is drastically decentralised. I would suggest the following as the skeleton of a scheme:—

(1) There should be a single Ministry of Munitions.

(2) The country should be divided up into 10 or 12 well-defined manufacturing regions of known manufacturing capacity.

(3) The Minstry of Munitions should allocate to each region a bulk production programme and the necessary materials to carry it out. At this point national control should cease.

(4) The distribution of the programme and the materials throughout the region should be done by a Regional Board and Material Controls working under a Regional Commissioner.

(5) Each region should be industrially complete and independent, so that practically no purchases except fundamental raw materials need be bought outside the region. To achieve this, shadow factories for small tools, etc., should be created if necessary in the region.

(6) Inspection and testing should be dealt with regionally and the highest authoritative decision should be available in each region.

I regard (5) as extremely important. The loss of output which is arising at present from (*a*) materials being transported all over the country, (*b*) country-wide searches for innumerable small but essential items, (*c*) personnel travelling all over the country in vain endeavours to hurry things up, (*d*) endless and vexatious trunk calls and telegrams, must in the aggregate be very large.

D. S. ANDERSON

Points from letters:

My wife and son keep a news and tobacco shop. The other day, enter a war worker. Cigarettes? No. Tobacco? No. Matches? No. "My mates and I are chucking this Sunday work." "Why?" "Well what's the good of earning good money when there's nothing to spend it on?" The suggestion that there were War Savings was very coldly received. He went on: "There's a lot of the single men that work a couple of Sundays and get the extra pay and then take a week off." "Doesn't the foreman do anything about it?" "How can he?" When asked why the bachelors didn't earn all they could the war worker said: "When you get on the income-tax scale you're working at a lower rate, that's why." It is the comparison between these views and the enormous sacrifices endured by men who lose salaries and businesses, and whose families suffer privation when they are called up for army service which strikes one as all wrong. A. MORGAN YOUNG

What is stopping the woman? The crux of the matter is that not only must she herself eat, but she must also arrange for her husband and children to be fed. As most factories work till 5.30 or 6.0 p.m., it is impossible for the woman worker to get to the food shops. This winter they will be closing at 4.30 to 5 p.m., and most of them seem to be also closing at midday, the only time left to the woman worker. Here are some alternative suggestions:

(1) All married women in war factories to have two half-days off in each week, or

(2) All food shops to be opened on Sundays to supply war workers, or

(3) All food shops to keep open till 8 p.m., or

(4) Communal feeding centres to be set up in every area to provide all meals every day for each worker. MOLLIE JONES

Shop stewards are not qualified by education, training, or experience to remedy managerial defects in industry. No doubt they are one and all willing to suggest what, in their opinion, would constitute improvements, but on what possible grounds can one justify preferring their opinions to those of their superior officers in the industrial army? They are just average manual workers who were forced to leave school at the age of 14, who have not yet shown sufficient ability to reach the first rung in the ladder of promotion to become charge-hands, for no charge-hand can be a shop steward. They are selected by their fellow-workers on grounds of popularity, or maybe by gift of the gab, or again as the men with the largest number of grievances to air, but only on rare occasions on the grounds of exceptional skill at their craft. They fulfil a useful, in fact an essential, function in industry, but in the nature of things their range of vision is limited. The *New Propellor's* remedy of clearing out incompetent managers sounds very simple, but capable managers to take their place are certainly not to be found amongst the ranks of shop stewards.

SOCIALIST NON-COMMUNIST

FREE ALLIES

SIR—May I crave the hospitality of your columns for the following protest:

The 226 Party Trade Union and Co-operative functionaries of the oppressed Sudeten German Labour Movement assembled at a Conference at Holborn Hall on September 28th, 1941, lift their voices in protest against the national socialist régime of terror established in the so-called Protectorate, which fills them with disgust and revolt. They feel confident that the appointment of the Gestapo leader Heydrich as "Protector" will fail to break the admirable spirit of resistance of the Czech people. The Conference send the Czech nation and the Czech working-class their greetings and the assurance of their immutable solidarity. They feel united with them in their struggle for liberation. It is their firm belief that

the Sudeten German workers, who have made so heavy sacrifices in the fight against Hitlerism, will help, at the decisive hour, in revenging not only their own victims, but also the Czech martyrs who have given their lives in their nation's struggle for freedom.

In a further resolution the Conference welcome the Atlantic Charter as a document affording a basis for an understanding between the liberated Czechoslovak nation and the Sudeten Germans purged of the Nazi spirit, and express their unanimous approval of a settlement of our old problems within the historical frontiers of Bohemia and Moravia.

WENZEL JAKSCH, Chairman,
Sudeten German Social Democratic Party.

SIR,—Lt.-Col. Hans Kahle referred in his letter to Mr. Morrison's reply at the Scottish Labour Party Conference in Edinburgh concerning the formation of a Free German Brigade in this country and pointed out that he could give the assurance "that there is a large number of German refugees in Great Britain who are wholeheartedly willing to fight Hitler as soldiers."

As former Austrian officers of the International Brigade we welcome Lt.-Col. Kahle's statement, and know that we can do this also in the name of all the other Austrian members of the International Brigade in this country.

The Austrian Anti-Fascists are anxious to fight against Hitler-Fascism with all means and particularly to take up arms against the common enemy. At a rally of the "Austrian Youth" (which has been addressed by Col. Wedgwood, M.P.) the proposal to form an Austrian unit as a section of a newly built-up International Brigade was fervently applauded.

Austria was the country first overrun by Hitler and the Austrian people are fighting as allies of Great Britain and the Soviet Union against their oppressors. An Austrian fighting unit would bring the maximum mobilisation of Austrian anti-Nazis in this country and at the same time help to raise the spirit of the Austrian people at home. The recognition of Austria as an ally and a united representative body of their fellow fighters in Great Britain would strengthen the anti-Nazi forces.

ALFRED HREJSEMNOU (Lieutenant),
Former Company Commander in the
1st Tank Regiment.
FRANZ PIXNER (Captain),
1st Battaillon de Guerilleros.

THE FOOD PROBLEM

SIR,—A land worker in most cases is away from home for at least 11½ to 12 hours each day, during which time he is in a remote district, away from restaurants, whether communal or canteen. He thus has to rely upon a "packed-up" breakfast, dinner—and if working, during the summer months, till 7 or 8 p.m.—tea as well. Any housewife will know that there is not much variety to be made. Apart from the cheese, which only just makes part of the pack for a week, the butter and margarine are obviously insufficient, as is also, of course, the meat. These foods, with eggs and milk, are essential to provide the energy which a worker wants to be able to work 10 to 12 hours a day—in all weathers The grumble is not against rationing and shortage of foodstuffs, but in the fact that one can see in the shops in the towns adjoining plenty of cooked meats, pies and other suitable goods, but the cost of which is obviously prohibitive to an agricultural worker, especially with a family. Also such beneficial institutions as the British Restaurant and Woolton Café are out of the question, unless the worker is within 5 or 10 minutes, which is rare. Thus we see people who can either afford these "supplementary" foods or who can feed at restaurants, etc., getting plenty of *energising* food, but are not doing heavy work.

The solution seems to rest in either increased wages or increased rations—or perhaps both, for, with 48s. a week, increased rations may not be all that beneficial. I think you will find that most land-workers will admit that their energy for work is not as it has been in the past, when fats, cheese, milk, eggs and meat were unrationed. For your information I am myself an agricultural worker on a market garden.

JOHN E. MANSELL

SIR,—May I comment on the subject of food and the black market? The small retailer is in the unfortunate position of having to rely almost entirely on the wholesalers with whom he is registered, and with whom, in most cases, he was a regular pre-war buyer. In theory he receives a percentage quota on his pre-war figures. Actually he takes what he is sent, which is usually considerably less. If the wholesaler in his turn buys from the M.O.F., who controls the raw materials when they are imported, where are the tremendous quantities of canned food offered at prohibitive prices coming from? Surely it is time the Ministry of Food gave us an answer to this point.

IRENE TAYLOR

SHELTER LIFE

SIR,—You have probably heard of the work of the Bermondsey Shelter Council among people who take shelter in public shelters during the hours of darkness. The necessity for the work arose, of course, out of the situation during the blitz last winter, when people were herded together in shelters with nothing to do, which might have had a very bad effect upon their morale. We organised concerts, debates, innumerable educational classes, films, etc., and we propose to be ready to begin again this winter. Many people are already going back to shelters to sleep in anticipation of the possibility of a blitz.

We are in great need of equipment and help of various sorts. We need pianos and wind instruments; pianists and accordion players; conjurors, entertainers and artists of all sorts, particularly those who can do without a piano; people who would be willing to drive a car during the black-out period, and anyone willing to learn to operate a cinema projector.

We should be most grateful if you could assist us to secure this help through the medium of the columns of your newspaper; we need hardly tell you that this part of London has been very badly hit, so that the need is really great.

187 Bermondsey Street, S.E.1. LESLIE G. FISHER, Chairman, Executive Committee, Rector of Bermondsey.

ARMS AND THE MEN

SIR,—Your eminently sound criticism of some features of our army organism to-day induces me to mention a fact. In no army in the world, before 1914, was military formality carried to greater lengths than in the Prussian Guard Corps. Nevertheless it was an everyday occurrence to see a private soldier—usually a one-year volunteer who could afford the luxury—enter a fashionable restaurant in Berlin, stand for a second or less rigidly to attention in front of an officer seated at a table, and then move off to his own place for a meal. The officer would make a tiny sign of assent with his head and there was no more formality. It is pathetic to think of the fictitious aids to smartness, such as swagger canes and gloves, which Authority evidently now considers necessary for military training.

Ottery St. Mary. W. H-H. WATERS, Brigadier-General

SIR,—"Technician," writing in your issue of September 13th, 1941, asks for a little more of what we are fighting for, democracy. The writer has frequently argued in the same vein with respect to the armed forces; maintaining that military discipline, which was designed to control small medieval armies of mercenary thugs, does not work in a large citizen army because it destroys initiative and morale.

Nevertheless we must recognise that there are two distinct ways of controlling an organisation for efficient operation:

1. Control may be decentralised, leaving free rein to individual effort at the expense of inefficiency due to individual slackness.

2. Control may be centralised and disseminated downward through just rules and red tape. Slackness is thereby prevented, but the singular effort of the gifted and energetic individual is lost.

The first type is undoubtedly the more efficient in the long run, but it takes time to build. It works through habits. It must evolve from the second type. The large hurriedly built organisation which the nation has had to produce since the beginning of the war is not ready for this evolution yet. We must have iron-bound control to prevent chaos.

The difficulty which a junior officer encounters in passing on the rules sent down from above, when those rules are sometimes foolish, can be largely overcome by treating the matter with a sense of humour. Most men can be laughed out of self-pity. At the same time every effort must be made to build up the prestige of the junior officer.

CANADIAN OFFICER

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JONATHAN CAPE

BOOKS IN GENERAL

In the last few years a good deal has been made of the treatment of social problems in the novels of Dickens, and, indeed, of all the early Victorian novelists. We speak of Victorian complacency and so much of the pictorial art, especially the portraiture, seems to confirm the description; yet when we really look into what was happening—Chartism, the Reform, the riots, slumps, the rise of Coketown and the railways changing the whole face of England—we see that the portraits display only a best Sunday-suit expression, something hurriedly put on to cover for a moment a figure which was aggressive, dynamic and full of unrest. And when we turn to the novelists, and especially to their reformist activities, we may not always be impressed by their propaganda, but we must be impressed by the fact that here are people who are part and parcel of their society. They take responsibility. They feel the world pulsing in themselves.

We still live in an expanding society, but it has expanded—and its problems with it—beyond national frontiers; the Circumlocution Office has turned itself into an efficient Gestapo; we fear not the workhouse but the concentration camp; not the pickpockets and burglars of the London fog but the dossier of the secret police. These considerations force the critic back to the conclusion that the chief lesson that Dickens and his like have to teach us is the value of their sense of the unity of society and of their awareness of the social animal in man.

Looking back upon the praise which Dickens has received because of his social propaganda, we can see that to many it has been sufficient that he had radical and reformist views. A Marxist writer, for example (Mr. T. A. Jackson), has all but claimed him for the Party, Dickens being admitted when a number of far more revolutionary contemporaries would be rejected for sundry indelicacies of *petit bourgeois* thought. By his spell, his vagueness and his art of prophetic and comic incantation, Dickens has infected his readers with a wish to generalise. G. K. Chesterton, for example, waves the wand and turns the author of *Hard Times* into another Cobbett. The time was ripe for a far more exact statement of what Dickens did and did not say, and this involved not only reading his novels, which was a pleasure, but reading his journalism, which was not, and of reading, too, a number of his high-minded critics like Harriet Martineau, not to mention Acts of Parliament and the now dusty wrangles of Victorian sociologists. Such a statement has now been produced by the patient, acute and thoughtful labours of Mr. Humphry House,* and for the first time chapter and verse are brought into a somewhat airy discussion. Mr. House has done far more than a piece of sober research, to which all future writers on Dickens will have to go; he has made Dickens and his period illustrate each other; he has given a place to their common contradictions, so that both are alive; and he has restored the third dimension of solidity to a figure that, like an actor's, so easily seems to have only two.

What are the reasons for the huge popularity of Dickens, the only great novelist who is read by very simple and ordinary people? At the beginning, Mr. House points out, there was the Dickens's atmosphere, which seems to have started in his habit of retrospection. He put back the date of *Pickwick Papers* nine years in order to catch the contemporary sentiment for the stage coach. The violent changes of environment made all the young early-Victorians middle-aged before their time; a large public who had spent their childhood gazing at the fast mail-coaches which ran on the new macadam roads found themselves prematurely dated by the locomotive. Mr. House has discovered some adroit criticisms from the *Quarterly Review* of 1837 on this point. The reviewer—with the temporary advantage of not being infected by the fever of the Dickens legend—pointed out that Mr. Weller was thoroughly out-of-date. Fast coaches could not be driven by cheerful old drunks like Mr. Weller; they would have overturned. Count Keyserling's "civilisation of chauffeurs" had begun, despite the glamorous mystifications of Pickwick:

> The fact is the old race of coachman were going out when Mr. Washington Irving first visited England, and were altogether gone before Mr. Dickens's time. The modern race are more addicted to tea than beer.

The next point worth noting is that Dickens was behind the advanced thought of his time; or, more accurately, he was not a pioneer, but he called for the reform of evils which had been made familiar to the public conscience by others. The agitation about imprisonment for debt is an instance. Dickens drew on his memories of childhood in the Marshalsea. He grew up into the reform of such evils like an heir coming into his estate. Moreover, he was as suspicious of the reform he desired. Not being an intellectual he was not terrorised by the grim determinism of Malthus, and, in consequence, he fell foul of the new Poor Law, which was supposed to be so enlightened, and of social workers like Harriet Martineau. In her novel, *Weal and Woe at Garveloch*, Mrs. Martineau makes a young man break off his engagement on the grounds that he "must check the tendency of the population to increase in an alarming ratio." She rated Dickens for not using his great influence to teach "the necessity and blessedness of homely and incessant self-discipline, and dwell a little less fondly on the grosser indulgences and commoner beneficence, which are pleasant enough in their own place, but which can never make a man and a society so happy as he desires them to become."

The doctrine of sacrifice once more! Perhaps it was woolly of Dickens to believe in benevolence, education and the friendly police, but, on the whole, one is glad that he feared revolution more than he feared Malthus. His vagueness was not merely the good nature of the middle-class man in easy circumstances; it was profoundly humane.

The way his mind worked is illustrated by Mr. House from the attack on the poor-house system in *Oliver Twist*. This novel was written three years after the new law came into force. Was the awful institution ruled by Mr. Bumble an accurate picture of the reformed workhouse? Mrs. Martineau said not. What Dickens had done was to draw from the old model and palm it off as the new. Now, as Mr. House shows, it is true that Oliver must have been born under the old system and returned, after an absence, to the new one. But the public knew—there was already an outcry about it—that the new workhouses were often being run by the old officials, and that the sparse diet was the result of the Malthusian policy of restricting charity to the utmost. The public knew that there had been a gross administrative failure. Dickens, with his journalist's sense of what the public knows, dramatised the failure.

It is easy to show that Dickens was not, as is sometimes claimed, a writer about the proletariat. He faces the industrial horror in Coketown; he explores crime and the slums, but he has no contact with the workers. *Hard Times* is proof enough that he is the visiting middle-class southerner of the commercial class; a middle-class person of the north would have had a real contact—as Mrs. Gaskell showed in *Mary Barton* or *North and South*. An individualist, he was temperamentally attracted, of course, by the aberrations of individualism, like Betty Higden; the people who would sooner be vagrants than submit and who, as vagrants, are from a political point of view quite harmless. But this does not mean that in the growing complacency of the century, after the railway had civilised manners and killed the roystering eighteenth-century chaos for good, Dickens became a politician of merely theatrical speeches without practical substance. Mr. House has gone through his activities in connection with the Board of Health at the time of the cholera epidemic, and here one must be amazed by his energy on committees, his efforts to get something practical done. If Dickens hated theories just because they were theories, and preserved a truculent independence which could easily have become so comfortable that it would seem to be enough, he appears to have been intensely practical. The fantastic muddles of administration and of human affairs which he liked to write about, were done by a man precise and orderly in his habits. And then by the time the railways had conquered, English life had become duller. The old orgies were no longer possible. The loose plot of Pickwick gives way to the more solemn complications of *Our Mutual Friend*; the innocent snobbery of *David Copperfield* gives place to the conscious study of the subject in *Great Expectations*.

I have taken only one or two points from Mr. House's book. I have said little about one of its best chapters, *The Changing Scene*, which is a remarkable essay on mid-Victorian life, and shows, by long quotations from Dickens's descriptive reporting of railway journeys, a forgotten aspect of his talent. Nor have I said anything about Dickens and money, on which Mr. House is particularly good. Is the explanation of Dickens's popularity not only his goodness and the fact that he makes a complete world out of Victorian England, but that he knew how that world paid its way? The continuous human preoccupation with money is strong, perhaps stronger, than the preoccupation with sex, is in all but his benign and idealised characters who have passed into the sanctity of comfortable retirement on their means. In the others, in the fantastic ones, it is money which roots them to what the world really is for the poor and the lower middle class. Weller, Swiveller, Pip, Micawber—they are grotesques rescued from pure fantasy by the fact that an anxious hand is always feeling the shillings and pence in their trousers pockets.

V. S. PRITCHETT

* *The Dickens World.* By Humphry House. Oxford University Press. 10s. 6d.

FIGHTER PILOT

Fighter Pilot. A Personal Record of the Battle of France, September 8th, 1939, to June 13th, 1940. *Batsford.* 6s.

Fighter Pilot is, I believe, the first book of its kind to be published in England and, at least as a study of temperament, is likely to remain one of the most interesting. Quite apart from the fact that no account of his adventures written by a serving officer can appear without submission to the Ministry concerned, and that the Air Ministry has a fine record of restraint and caution, I should feel no doubt that, both in detail and in general effect, the story told by this anonymous fighter pilot was absolutely authentic. Second only to the interest of the material is the interest of the self-portrait his volume draws. Here is a man, still at an age when the average man has not yet taken the true measure of his ambitions and sympathies, who has already encountered what may prove to have been his supreme experience, the determining crisis of his whole career. It is improbable that at any future period he will taste fear more acute, excitement more intense, fatigue more excruciating. His personality seems to consist of several different layers. In some respects hardened to complete maturity, in others he is strangely—often disarmingly—youthful. Certain human beings can pass through astonishing adventures and, thanks to their innate stupidity, emerge unscathed. "Fighter Pilot" does not belong to that sub-human class; clearly his sensitiveness is developed beyond the average and exaggerated by a natural disposition towards the delights of peace. Before a visit to the local *bolte de nuit* he walks round Nancy, admires a chestnut avenue and enjoys the architectural splendours of the superb Place Stanislas: he explores a snow-bound park and photographs the pendant ice-crystals at the mouth of a grotto: up at 27,000 feet with the country below him "stretching away, flat, and soft and peaceful, into the heart of Germany . . . flat white cloud layers, blue sky and brilliant sun above," he is filled with "that curious sensation of aloofness and remoteness which only the pilot knows," when the mind indulges in rapt day-dreaming and concentration dissolves. "Scientists say it is lack of oxygen, but I think there are other causes, too. . . ."

Running through his personal composition is a strain of religious faith. He is a devout Catholic; and, though the faith he professes and the beliefs he holds have little intellectual bearing on his thoughts or conduct, they colour the background of his private emotional life. God has no fixed place in his personal universe, perhaps because (as happens with many believers whose Catholicism has been inherited) the idea of a lurking divinity is omnipresent. Thus it seems natural enough that, having shot down his first enemy plane, he should leave the celebration to say a prayer on the steps of the village church for the man he has killed "before I got too boozy"; and that when he is himself shot down, and bales out over a wood where he expects to break his legs, he should be "bloody frightened" and say "several prayers, both of thanks and supplication," as he dangles in the air. "Fighter Pilot's" transparency is part of the charm of his book. His feelings are strong, seldom complicated, expressed sometimes in a romantic but never in a pretentious style. The opening sections are slangy and chaotic; but, as the pace of events quickens, the method of the narrative gains in skill and vigour. Sitting on the banks of the Moselle with "a girl called Germaine," faintly and distantly, then on a more thunderous and insistent note, he hears the cannonade start up along the Maginot Line. Soon the aerodrome is being heavily

bombed; ghostly processions of refugees file past under the poplars; there begins for the pilots a life of constant movement, appalling physical exertion, killing nervous strain.

The author's recollections of his adventures from mid-May to mid-June, 1940, are conveyed in a series of impressionistic snatches. The impression of fatigue is unforgettable. Scarcely have the airmen fallen into bed than they are roused and hurried off again to man their fighters:

> We didn't have to struggle back into full wakefulness as in days gone by, but were wide awake in a flash; or, rather, we were on our feet almost before we realised our whereabouts, automatically buttoning up our tunics and buckling on our revolvers. I don't think we ever really slept now. We'd forgotten what sleep was like, forgotten almost the need of it. . . .

Before long they are too tired for the rest they need—the lightest breeze disturbs them when they lie outdoors; and, if they sleep, their sleep is haunted by dreams of combat. But, in the air, apprehension was replaced by a sort of cold mechanical determination;

> I fell to contemplating the quality of courage as it applied to us. I often felt afraid before a job, and though we none of us admitted it, I knew we all felt the same. Once in the cockpit, though . . . the fear turned to the tension of excitement, which was subjugated in its turn to the concentration required in taking off and joining up in the air. From then on one got no time for thinking of anything but finding the enemy, of searching every visible cubic inch of air, and of seeing him before he saw you. When one did see him, all the tension and concentration of one's body was focused in a great leap of the heart, a flicking-over in the pit of one's stomach. It always made me swallow a couple of times. After that it was a simple matter: sights switched on, range and wing-span indicators checked, gun-button on "fire," a quick look at the engine-instruments and altimeter, an adjustment to the airscrew control. . . . Then as one went into action, with one's body taut against the straps, teeth clenched, thumb on the gun-button . . . one felt one's pumping heart turn to a block of ice.

The author describes how he was wounded and brought down, one arm crippled, the other temporarily paralysed by a bullet, which had lodged against the spine at the base of the neck, and listened to "the rushing hiss of the wind over the cockpit" as the plane plunged earthwards in swoops and dives, and heard his own voice as he began to scream—

> Muffled but clearly audible, I heard myself say it, then shout it, then scream it: "God! God! I'm going to be killed! God!" Then I stopped screaming and looked into the bottom of the cockpit, thinking, "I won't feel it." . . . And suddenly my left arm recovered

This is among the most moving pieces of contemporary war literature I have yet seen printed. What (one feels obliged to ask) is the ultimate effect of such an experience on the human consciousness? What is the nature and the extent of the scar that it leaves behind? Can the man who has been brought up to oscillate between violent action and almost equally violent relaxation—the life of hard fighting and hard drinking—with few intermediate stages and little gradation between mood and mood, hope to be born again to the world of personal relationships and to the fruitful but monotonous rhythm of peace-time interests? Is the dislocation lasting? Will the psyche ever recover from the shocks it has undergone? The author cannot tell us. He does not himself know.

PETER QUENNELL

INSIDE GERMANY

Berlin Diary. By WILLIAM L. SHIRER. *Hamish Hamilton.* 12s. 6d.

The engrossing interest of Mr. Shirer's Diary comes from our intense desire to know what the world looks like from the other side of the German lines. Shirer was in charge of Columbia Broadcasting from Berlin from 1934 until the end of 1940. At first the Diary seems rather commonplace; we see at once that Shirer was one of those who early recognised the Nazi movement for what it was, who marvelled at the idiocy of British and French policy in Spain and foresaw the death of Europe unless that policy changed in time. The Diary becomes exciting for the first time when it describes from close quarters the contrast between Hitler, all jerks and nervous kicks in the carpet-biting stage before Munich, and Hitler with the assured swagger of the conqueror after the Munich surrender. Shirer is typical of a group of men to whom we owe a great deal. They are the professional American correspondents in Europe, very objective in their reporting, highly competent on the technical side, fearless and immensely industrious. Their job has been to inform the American public, and often, incidentally, the British, about what was really happening in Europe. If their judgment became less and less "impartial," that is because they moved from the detached reporting of news items to a mounting excitement in the drama itself, and finally to a desperate anxiety that the democracies would allow the curtain to ring down on tragedy. Shirer's observations are not particularly subtle and his writing has not the quality of Vincent Shean's or the personal angle that has made a best seller out of John Gunther. It is a diary written, as he says, for publication; it is composed of plain statement and honest comment. The latter part of the book is the most valuable. Here is a first-hand account of visits to Belgium and France in the wake of the victorious German armies, conversations with German generals in the smoking ruins of Louvain and the desolate boulevards of Paris. Here is an appraisal of the reactions of the Germans to bombing, though in 1940 its effects were not large. As propaganda the book should be a godsend to the Allies, for Shirer reacted so violently against Dr. Goebbels, and became so wholehearted an advocate of the British cause, that he seldom quotes an incident without telling us what propaganda Goebbels tried to make of it, and giving his own speculations about its truth. He early became a very active partisan of the anti-Nazi cause, always irritated that we did not bomb the Germans more, and righteously indignant when the Germans bombed us.

One needs to read a lot of this book to get its flavour. The exciting hook-ups on special occasions; the occasional meetings in Paris and Lisbon with Ed. Morrow, Shirer's opposite number in this country; his constant struggles with the censorship; his gradual decision that he was no longer able to do a decent job of work, no longer to get a hint of the truth to the American public; his personal observation that the Germans deliberately used the Red Cross sign to obtain immunity for their own military preparations and bombed the British Red Cross on the assumption, he thinks, that the British would also camouflage their guns as hospitals. He confirms, from his observation, that both in the army and the navy the Germans have in fact gone a long way towards establishing a democratic attitude between officers and men. On board a warship he found that the men on all German men-of-war get exactly the same kind and the same amount of food as the officers. The Nazis have recalled "that the German revolution in 1918 started here in Kiel among the discontented sailors."

He notes a similar change in the German army.

> The great gulf between officers and men is gone in this war. There is a sort of equalitarianism. I felt it from the first day I came in contact with the army at the front. The German officer no longer represents—or at least is conscious of representing—a class or caste. All the men in the ranks feel this. They feel like members of one great family. Even the salute has a new meaning. German privates salute each other, thus making the gesture more of a comradely greeting than the mere recognition of superior rank. In cafés, restaurants, dining-cars, officers and men off duty sit at the same table and converse as men to men.

He doubts whether German morale is as good under air bombardment as British, but he tells us that, partly as the result of this democratic revolution in the army, the morale of the army is "fantastic." He talked to General von Reichennau in the midst of the battle for France, and found him, like all the officers and men, self-efficient and absolutely assured.

A piece of evidence in which the British public will be particularly interested is Shirer's story of the killing of the mentally deficient in Germany. Some people will regard this as nasty, but sensible; others will be horrified to read that the Germans seem deliberately to have wiped out a considerable number of people who had to be looked after in institutions. Eugenics, of course, has nothing to do with it, for mental

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Constable

defect is a recessive quality, widespread amongst every population, and its incidence is not decreased by killing people of low-grade intelligence, who are, in any case, segregated. The interest of Shirer's evidence here lies in the picture it gives of the ruthless quality of the regime, which cares nothing for the concept of the sanctity of life and which can just as well be switched over to a decision to put to death all political opponents, or all Catholics, or all of any other group in society which Himmler happens to regard as expensive, dangerous or otherwise undesirable.

The final impression left by Shirer's picture of Germany is of a country in which everyone outside the army and the officials is apathetic, disillusioned and craving only a quiet life. The public, he says, is nauseated by being repeatedly told that German raids over Britain are "reprisals." I have remarked the same reaction in this country. When Berliners buy an evening paper they ask for "ten pfennigs of reprisals." But few, he says, now bother to buy evening papers and they quickly turn off the radio news "with that expressive Berlin exclamation: 'Oh, *Quatsch*,' which is stronger than 'Oh, nonsense.'" Plenty of scope, it seems, for "political warfare" from this side. TOM PAINE

A LIFE SENTENCE

Who Walk Alone. By PERRY BURGESS. *Dent.* 12*s.* 6*d.*

Dr. Burgess has for the last fifteen years been the President and Director of the American Leprosy Foundation. In this well-written and, for its purpose, well-constructed book he tells, in the form of an autobiography, the story of the life of a man well known to him.

Who Walk Alone is the biography of a real person, Ned Langford, a report of whose death, taken from a local newspaper circulating in his home town, is reprinted as an appendix to the book. He was a normal, healthy young American who in 1898 threw up his university career to serve in the American army in the Philippines. From the Philippines he returned home, apparently safely, inherited from his father a well-established business, fell in love, was engaged to be married and planned to set up a home. Then certain strange physical symptoms, of which he could not but be suspicious, showed themselves. Medical specialists confirmed his own half-repressed fears. In the Philippines he had become infected with leprosy, which, during all the intervening years, had remained apparently dormant. Consequently, he had to leave everything and everyone he liked, and to spend the rest of his life in the leper colony on the tropical island of Culion, where—and this is the miracle—he succeeded, to quote the blurb, "in coming to terms with the horror that hung over him, built a new life, and found love and work and purpose."

Dr. Burgess' book is not an easy one for me to review. Judged by conventional literary standards, it is neither fish, flesh, fowl nor good red herring. The main biographical facts of the book are, I believe, literally true; but there is a Hollywood touch about the second half of the book which, in spite of the author's and the publisher's asserverations, for me at any rate lessens rather than increases the moral impressiveness of the bare, unromanticised truth.

Leprosy is still one of the great scourges of the world. It is estimated that some three million people are even now infected with it; South-eastern Asia, including China and India, parts of Africa, and parts of South America being the most severely affected regions. The disease has become a very rare one in this country, though there is an institution where British lepers are received and given medical treatment. The infectiousness of leprosy is far less than is usually supposed; but treatment, which is still mostly empiric, is unsatisfactory; and lifelong isolation from the uninfected world is consequently the sufferer's usual fate.

Dr. Burgess evidently adopted the form he has chosen as effective for bringing home to people's minds what it means suddenly to be notified that one's contact with the ordinary world and with all one's friends and accustomed interests must end at once, and that the rest of life must be spent in the society of lepers and their doctors and nurses. By thus provoking sympathy, public support for the scientific research work now being conducted is likely to be won. Further, the book should appeal to those actually infected with leprosy and to those in charge of leper settlements, as showing what great results may be attained in building up real human interests and real human activities in the leper colonies themselves. As in prisons, and as in many tuberculosis sanatoria, idleness and purposelessness are among the most distressing and the most demoralising of evils. The large and financially successful fishing industry which this man, Ned Langford, built up in the island of Culion, with its population of nearly 4,000 lepers, shows what can be done and how great the human purpose thus served may be. HARRY ROBERTS

INGLESE ITALIANATO

Italy in Africa. By CHRISTOPHER HOLLIS. *Hamish Hamilton.* 10*s.* 6*d.*

Italy Militant. By ERNEST HAMBLOCH. *Duckworth.* 12*s.* 6*d.*

The first of these works covers the Italian occupations of Libya, Eritrea, Somaliland and Abyssinia. "Occupations" is used advisedly, for the actual administration of the colonies is slightly, though rosily, sketched. The author concentrates upon the motives for Italian expansion, the power-politics involved, and the various invasions. The greater part of the space is devoted to Abyssinia. Readers need no telling that Mr. Hollis writes well and lightly. Almost every page sparkles with neat phrases, such as: "In Abyssinia, as in other Oriental countries, the only motive which would persuade them actually to make a necessary reform was the motive of fear. They might in the last resort do something, if persuaded that only thus could foreign conquest be avoided. Therefore the effect of security given to them by membership of the League of Nations was wholly disastrous." Neat—but true? No. The epoch of serious reform dated from Haile Selassie's accession to the throne as emperor, seven years after Abyssinia joined the League. Fireworks light little but themselves, and it is difficult to thread the black jungle of inter-imperial politics by the coruscation of a Catherine-wheel. There are scores of astonishing mistakes, such as the assertion that Ras Tafari's deposition of Lij Yassu, Menelik's successor, was supported by Germany. The opposite was the case: Lij Yassu threatened Eritrea, and his removal was heartily welcomed by the Western Allies. It would almost seem that Mr. Hollis based his history upon the Italian statement to the League of Nations, which would show a truly ingenuous spirit. Ingenuousness, however, has less place here than partisanship, variously applied. First, the truth about Italy is suppressed. The massacres of the peasants of Tripoli are unmentioned; the near-extermination of the Cyrenaicans is solely described as "the business of pacification"; the terror of Addis Abbaba is condoned because of the strained nerves of the Italian garrison. There is much holy horror at African atrocities, but the one Italian method which the author questions is the use of poison gas, and then only because it impaired the laws of civilised warfare and lowered standards of European good faith. Secondly, the case of Abyssinia is dismissed with a few sweeping denigrations: it is a "revolting" country, whose "odious" people live in "primeval slime," which the Emperor was "impotent" to reform, and its one hope was to be civilised by Italy. The words "civilisation," "barbarism" and "savages" are freely used, always as epithets of race: civilisation means White; barbarism, Black; there is no attempt whatever to correlate savagery with savage behaviour. Indeed, Mr. Hollis's moral standards are purely personal. Murder committed by his enemy is an outrage; murder committed by his friend is a commendable vengeance upon savages. This primitive gang-loyalty is occasionally masked by annoyance with Italy. The conquest of Abyssinia could not remedy Italy's poverty nor her over-population, so that her substantial grievances were irrelevant to Mussolini's policy. Indeed, poor Mr. Hollis feels the irritation of a medieval knight, conventionally bound to champion honour in distress, who could not help noticing as he drew his sword that he was rescuing no blushing maiden, but a painted Jezebel. So he is forced to fall back upon two main theses; that Italy was bringing order and civilisation to Abyssinia; and that this "petty problem," which "did not matter twopence to anybody," caused Italy to join the Axis and thus helped to wreck European civilisation. Of course, to the author, Africans are not human beings, and count as nothing. So apparently does the danger to Britain of a bellicose empire commanding the Red Sea and the Sudan

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The Bodley Head

Nor does any important conclusion attach to the corruption of European policy revealed by the Abyssinian dispute. Writers on current events are tempted to assume an attitude of superiority to the feelings of the common people, who demand that their fate should be judged by standards of justice and humanity; to forget that the advocacy of the diplomat is incompatible with the integrity of the historian.

Mr. Hambloch, who is no apologist for Fascism, is a far better advocate of Italy, for he loves it dearly and knows it well. He believes that the regime is a passing, though characteristic, disease which has smitten a nation of hardworking, ingenious, intelligent people, at once superstitious and sceptical, amorous and unsentimental. He proves his case by illustrations—all learned, and some very entertaining—from Italian history. Thus he considers that Mussolini derives much more directly from Dante's cruel spite than from his avowed master Machiavelli. It seems that the Duce earned a doctorate by a remarkably silly essay on the Florentine Secretary, whom he deformed when he did not misunderstand him. Mr. Hambloch is, in fact, in love with the old liberal, humanistic Italy; his man, of the great trinity of letters, is Boccaccio; of the trinity of liberation, Cavour. He rates freedom, of the mind especially, as the highest good, and consequently has nothing but censure for the Roman Church; it is surely unfair to dismiss the Lateran Treaty as a sale of the Vatican to Fascist policy for cash down. But Mr. Hambloch, while he sees in Mussolini's career, from the murder of Matteoti to the entry into the war, an inevitable sequence, yet is persuaded that this bemused Italy of Fascism will pass, and the Italians regain their natural and likeable character.

FREDA WHITE

THE BABE AT THE BREAST

The Nursing Couple. By MERRELL P. MIDDLEMORE, M.D. *Hamish Hamilton.* (Medical Books.) *7s. 6d.*

Dr. Middlemore had the inspiration to apply her knowledge, as a psycho-analyst and as a doctor, to a piece of research on a subject so fundamental that hitherto it has escaped scientific enquiry. She undertook to watch the behaviour of a series of new born babies at the breast. This was done in the ward of a teaching hospital. Such observations inevitably and properly included observation of the mother's behaviour, of the nurse's, and of the effect of disciplined practices on all three concerned. She has been able to describe and interpret what she saw with great lucidity, and even to discriminate between definite feeding types of babies so accurately that every experienced mother or nurse would recognise them. Her definitions come almost as a relief, for they conjure entities from what has hitherto been no more than a collection of clinical data.

This book's main concern is naturally with babies in whose cases there are initial difficulties of adaptation to breast feeding. Of those sturdy infants who have a successful zest for satisfying their wants, there is little to be said, for they overcome whatever inconvenience their external environment presents, since their internal environment gives them no trouble. It is on the question of environment that Dr. Middlemore makes her greatest contribution, but to appreciate it entails an understanding of environment in a new sense. It would appear that a baby has little means, at first, of distinguishing between stimuli that reach it from outside its body, from those within. That is to say, discomfort from clumsy or rough handling may upset it in much the same way as hunger pains, and it responds to both by a kind of withdrawal. Such babies, by seeming to resent the breast and the activities of both nurse and mother, cause distress and exasperation to both in varying degree, depending on the stability of their own emotional adjustments. The inexperienced mother who has perhaps dreaded her capacity to suckle successfully, and who is in any case a tired being who has recently gone through the experience of childbirth, tends to become discouraged and nervous. This leads to clumsiness and awkwardness in her handling, thereby making matters worse. The nurse, a busy being, who wants orderliness according to the routine she favours, finds the baby "difficult" also, so does the doctor, and according to their own emotional make-up, they tend to become impatient with the mother's and the child's ineffectuality. Both or either may then enforce notions of their own, not always helpful or in accordance with the temperament of mother or child.

The lesson this book has to teach is therefore a multiple one addressed to all the adults concerned. It is no less than a reasoned plea for considering the baby as an individual from the first, and its mother as being the *fons et origo* of its environment. Nothing should be allowed to come between them in the matter of rigid routine or other forms of misunderstanding. Intelligent advice, in the form of explanation and rational behaviour from the mother's professional attendants, would give her confidence and capacity in a procedure that is of all human relationships the most mutually satisfying, pleasurable and beneficent.

The conclusions of this book have been given at some length because the reviewer feels that its meaning is of universal application in a world of increasing frustrations, which, as it shows, often "begin at home." For all persons such as mothers, nurses and doctors who have an immediate practical concern in the welfare of future generations, it serves as the first map of an uncharted territory. Unfortunately, like many other explorers, Dr. Middlemore died before she could devise specialised versions for the different adult users. Until this has been done, one can only repeat the advice of Dr. Glover in his Introduction, namely, that "Every mother who can afford it should buy three copies of this book, one for herself, one for her doctor, and one for the nurse."

AUGUSTA BONNARD

Father John Sullivan, S.J. By the REV. FERGAL MCGRATH, S.J. *Longmans.* *8s. 6d.*

This is the biography of a member of the Reform Club whose relics are now used to cure anaemia and ulcers. The author duly gives warning that "the words Saint, Miracle, etc., are employed in a purely historical sense, and without any intention of anticipating the judgment of the Apostolic See." For before a man is beatified or canonised, the Vatican must examine and accept the evidence for the miracles attributed to him. In the meanwhile, however, his intercession may legitimately be called upon by the faithful.

John Sullivan was born in 1861, the son of a barrister who in 1883 became Lord Chancellor of Ireland. His mother was a Catholic, but he was brought up as a Protestant. He was called to the Bar, he travelled in the Near East, he was known for the elegance of his clothes and the excellence of his whist. At the age of 35 he was received into the Catholic Church, but nothing is known of the intellectual and spiritual processes that led to his conversion. Four years later he began his novitiate in the Society of Jesus; he was ordained in 1907; he was for years a schoolmaster in the Jesuit college of Clongowes, and became well known as a confessor, a missionary for the afflicted, and a director of Retreats. He died in 1933. Though a good scholar, he was somewhat inarticulate in the pulpit; nor have his discourses survived except in the memories or notes of his auditors. His asceticism was extreme: he seems to have had no change of clothing, he filled his only pair of boots with pebbles, he ate little except rice, he prayed most of the night, and when he did sleep, slept upon the floor. "You have to be hard on yourself to work miracles; and he does it," said a poor woman who sought to be cured by him. An ever-increasing reputation for curing spiritual and physical maladies never weakened his wonderful humility, but he often prophesied with confidence that a cure would be effected. He has been held responsible even for the sudden improvement of a cow, of a kitchen-range and of the weather on the occasion of an outdoor ceremony. Since his death the local application of a relic has been found effective in a variety of complaints.

Fr. Fergal McGrath has compiled the life of this saintly man with considerable skill, avoiding the excesses and sentimentalities that are common in hagiography, and that occur in some of the tributes paid to Fr. Sullivan. A photograph shows the beautiful, inhuman head of the thaumaturgic Jesuit. Catholics will be edified by accounts of his miracles and his teaching; others will be interested, surprised, impressed and probably puzzled by this description of a life so remote from their experience, and of practices that the more ignorant of them may suppose to have disappeared long since. The Catholic Church is only logical in maintaining that the relics of a member of the Reform Club can be no less effective than those which were officially venerated in the Fourth Century.

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The new issue of the Serial Map Service is of quite unusual interest. So few of us know the geography or the resources of the areas that are now the main theatres of the struggle. The theme is oil and the maps of Persia, of the Black Sea and of the oil resources of the Soviet Union throw an immediate light on the strategy of the war. The articles that go with these maps are equally informative; they are precise and objective. The last of the maps is the most exciting and unusual. It is an elaborate but clear exposition of the whole strategic situation in the Pacific; one sees where the American and the Japanese, British and Russian sea and air cross and clash; bases and the rival strength of the U.S.S.R. and Japan in the North Pacific, and the problems involved in attempting the defence of China, Indo-China and the Dutch East Indies. We should like to have an enlarged edition of this map to hang on the wall. To remember the relative positions of Guam and Saipan, of Saigon and Manila without a map is too much for most readers.

Week-end Competitions

No. 610

Set by G. B. Dodington

A first prize of two guineas and a second prize of half-a-guinea are offered for the best comments upon the Buchmanites supposedly received from Pepys, Dr. Johnson, Wesley, Macaulay, Cardinal Newman, Carlyle, Matthew Arnold, Renan, Queen Victoria or St. Francis. Entries may consist in several short comments or one longer one, not exceeding 250 words.

RULES—

1. Envelopes should be marked with the number of the Problem, in the top left-hand corner, and should be addressed to COMPETITIONS, 10 Great Turnstile, W.C.1. Solutions must reach the Editor by first post on Monday, October 20th.

2. The Editor's decision is final. He reserves the right to print in part or as a whole any matter sent in, whether it be awarded a prize or not. MSS. cannot be returned. When no entries reach the required standard no prize will be awarded.

RESULT OF COMPETITION No. 607

Set by V. S. Pritchett

The usual prizes are offered for Sir John Falstaff's defence of his dubious dealings in the Black Market. Length about 250 words.

Report by V. S. Pritchett

I meant to give competitors a choice this time by including Pecksniff and Thackeray's pusillanimous glutton, Jos Sedley; but as it turns out, Falstaff *à la* Great Turnstile instead of Eastcheap, is a considerable success. There was a hearty plunge into the whoreson, the scurvy and the plaguish. The general note may be illustrated by N. P. Meadway's:

> What is the treason that is charged against me? That I did but sell eggs, at a price forsooth, but even an egg hath its price; but the chiefest charge is that they were fresh sweet eggs, not a murrain of the foul, stinking, rotten, whoreson eggs from Tartary and Ind that these scrawny, lickspittle rogues would foist upon us!"

R. S. Jaffray ended a wonderful catalogue of "the cankers of a calm world and a long peace, ten times more dishonourable than a cracksman grown stiff-fingered" with a holy-eyed appeal:

> Soft! Who art thou? My Lord Woolton—there's honour for you—God keep me from narks.

Lord Woolton is, indeed, almost his patron Saint, the ever-invoked name, as no doubt it is in Soho, for as William and Ann Brown write:

> Yet happen I am a fool, for what saith my Lord Woolton? An a man pay seven shilling for a punnet of mouldy hedge fruit, 'tis not his lordship's concern, quotha; if weakness for a costard make weakness i' the costard, it toucheth him not, quotha. Nor yet it toucheth not old Jack.

I was chiefly attracted by those entries which took a hand at dialogue. R. V. G. has some amusing notes and comic misprints. And X was good with: "But in the matter of onions have I sinned?"

What was an egg to "the vast cavern of these bowels?" Answer: "A nought. A luncheon for a two-year-old. What are six eggs? A whet, Master Shallow, for what is to come—an' it but come, which God send it may." Two entries stood out in my opinion from the general high level: Jason's has the second prize for its use of the honour speech, which is what I had in mind when I set the competition, and for its adroit use of the Shakespearian lines, and one by Mr. Wm. Bliss. Mr. Bliss has the originality of showing Falstaff at work, a real nightbird, and the first prize goes to him. His footnote, that the scene is moved to the Garter instead of the Mermaid, because Falstaff would have left London after the air raids, and that the Falstaff of the Black Market is the Falstaff of the *Merry Wives*, is very nice.

FIRST PRIZE

SCENE: *A room in the Garter Inn.*

Falstaff: Mine host of the Garter,—a word in your ear!

Host: What, my bullyrook? Art thou secret?

Fal.: As lechery. Hark ye—and let not thy tongue wag! There will come here this night a waggon-load of provender. 'Tis for my use. See it be stored where no prying eye may find nor no filching hand steal. If there should be a bombard of sack, as I trust, see that doubly safe.

Host: But Sir John this is clean against the law;—'tis not honest;—I dare not—

Fal.: What? Art thou turned virtuous? *Thou?*—who has spent thy misbegotten life frothing and liming? Is not thy purse lined with cozening and thine house builded upon false measure? Dost *thou* prate of honesty?

Host: Why, why Sir John, a man must live.

Fal.: Ha! Out of thine own mouth I answer thee! Am *I* not a man? Nay, was I not ere this plaguey war some five men by the measure of my girdle? Must not *I* live? Must I bate? Must I dwindle? Shall my doublet hang about my knees and I be withered like an old Apple-john? A plague of all rationing and a murrain, too! See you to it, Host—or I lodge elsewhere?

Host: But, but Sir John, I dare not;—the Lord Woolton——

Fal.: But me no buts nor Woolton me no Woolstons! I am no long-staff sixpenny striker but a man of substance, a great oneyer! Am I not Warden of the Air? Have I not a commission in the Home Guard? Must I not lard the earth with exercising of my ragamuffins in the woods o' Sunday? And shall I bear these labours for the Commonwealth and starve withal?

Host: Well, well Sir John, it shall be as thou wilt.

Fal.: Well said, bully Hercules! Hark ye! 'Twill be after moonset when all honest men are sleeping. That Gentleman of the shade, Diana's forester, Gadshill, drives the wain—and the countersign is "Fernseed." Be vigilant!

Host: As a cat to steal cream!

WILLIAM BLISS

A plague of this War! Am I not fallen away vilely? Do I not bate? Do I not dwindle? Why, my skin hangs about me like an old lady's loose gown; I am withered like an old Apple-john.

I was as virtuously given as a man need to be; lived well and in good compass and now I live out of all order, out of all compass.

May I no longer take mine ease at mine inn, but I must be starved upon rinds of cheese or drenched with thin potations? Is that poor creature smallbeer my fit companion, and shall that honest gentleman sherris-sack be denied my entertainment? Do I not serve the King? Do I not watch o' nights? There is not a dangerous action can peep out its head but I am thrust upon it.

Who is this Woolton that I must starve at his behest? A whoreson Achitophel! A rascally yea-forsooth knave! I'll have no more of this rationing—foul fiend take the word! I'll seek out those minions of the moon, St. Nicholas' clerks, who prey upon their saint the Commonwealth and make their boots of her. They shall furnish me from the Black Market enough to lay by. Let others starve and go thirsty an they will, I'll no more of it.

What whispers Conscience? "Honesty?"—what is this "honesty?" It keeps a man's soul cleah? Yea, but how if it starve a man's body? How then? Can honesty find me a cup of sack? No; or serve me a roast capon? no; or take away the cravings of hunger and thirst? no. Honesty hath no skill to help me live then? No. What is Honesty? A word. What is that word "Honesty?" air. A trim reckoning! Who hath it? He that starved to death o' Wednesday. What doth it profit him? Nothing. Therefore I'll none of it; honesty is a mere counter; and so ends my Catechism.

JASON

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The sixth annual general meeting of Aspro Limited was held on Wednesday in London.

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The report was adopted.

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